WORLD / A22

Israel keeps up blistering offensive against Lebanon after Hezbollah leader defiantly declared open war in a conflict that's spiralling dangerously out of control despite international calls for restraint

NEWS / A8

GMA will go to Hawaii for centennial of the arrival of the first 15 Pilipino farmers to work there

JOB

Job opportunities for at least 5,000 Filipinos through the PDI Job Market Employment Expo 2006 July 17-19, Glorietta Activity Center

Expat Pinoys seek seats in parliamentary system

By Doris C. Dumlao

EXPAT PINOYS HAVE JOINED THE NATIONAL debate on Charter change by seeking equal representation in Congress under the concept of "supranational" citizenship, which is recognized in 85 countries including the European Community and former British colonies under the Commonwealth of Nations.

EXPAT, A4

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER Sunday
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS
Sunday, July 16, 2006 ★★ 11 sections / Vol. 31 / No. 218 P18 online: www.inq7.net

Bionic eye for grandma

WASHINGTON—IN THE 1970s TV show "The Six Million Dollar Man," the whopping young astronaut got a bionic eye. Next year, it might be your grandmother. VisionCare Ophthalmic Technologies Inc. is seeking US government ap-

BIONIC, A4

Coup financiers known

Gonzalez says he has names of 20 businessmen

By Armand Nocum

INVESTIGATORS HAVE IDENtified at least 20 "prominent" businessmen and other key individuals as deeply involved in destabilization plots, Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez said.

Gonzalez did not identify the alleged financiers who he said gave "direct" aid to the destabilization efforts but he claimed some of them were owners of franchises of a fast-food chain.

"We learned some franchisees are regularly giving food to (protesters) and are therefore deeply involved in destabilization moves," Gonzalez said in interviews with the Inquirer on Friday night and yesterday.

He clarified, however, "that the whole" fast-food chain was not involved.

He said one of those involved in the anti-Arroyo plots was "aspiring to be an ambassador."

Gonzalez said there were "20 prominent businessmen" who were deeply involved in the destabilization plots but the number could be more if those giving help out of "sympathy or friendship" were counted.

Ten of them financed the failed February coup while 10 others "have been financing destabilization moves since the time the Hyatt 10 withdrew their support from the Arroyo administration," Gonzalez said, when asked whether the government had also identified financiers of the Magdalo rebel soldiers.

COUP, A6

THE GRANDEUR OF IT ALL

President Arroyo, one of 2,000 foreign and local guests at the 60th birthday bash of Brunei's Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah, is ushered by her host into the 1,788-room palace on Saturday. (Story and more pictures on Page A8)

BRUNEI PHOTO

Asylum could be Bolante's defense vs deportation

By Nikki U. Rueda
Contributor

LOS ANGELES—FORMER AGRIculture Undersecretary Jocelyn "Joc-joc" Bolante has hired an immigration lawyer to represent him in deportation proceedings, bolstering speculation that he is seeking asylum to prevent his return to the Philippines.

Carl Shusterman, a former Immigration and Naturalization Service lawyer, said those seeking asylum as a defense against deportation could be detained for illegally staying in the United States until an immigration judge rules in a hearing on their asylum claim.

"[Bolante] is working with an immigration attorney," said Filipino-American lawyer Roman Mesquenda, who added that he spoke with the immigration lawyer yesterday.

But he refused to disclose what they had discussed or to even name the lawyer. "I promised to keep confidentiality," he said.

The Los Angeles-based Mesquenda said he had been scheduled to meet with Bolante at the San Pedro Detention Center in California on July 13 (July 14 in the Philippines).

But his meeting with the ex-agriculture official widely believed to be the architect of the P728-million fertilizer fund scam did not push through.

Mesquenda said he was not able to obtain permission from the immigration officer at the detention center to see Bolante but that he got busy and postponed the meeting.

He also denied being Bolante's lawyer, as was reported elsewhere.

"I was not and am not [Bolante's] lawyer, and I don't know whether [Bolante] is applying for asylum," Mesquenda said. "I was just explaining procedures to the asylum application process."

Mesquenda said he had been

BOLANTE, A2

WHAT'S INSIDE

Wife of the son of a major action star slugs, kicks, hits with badminton racket woman in Las Piñas. Guess who?

ENTERTAINMENT / A3-4

The word is out: Put your kids on a leash as world's biggest toy store 's' finally Pinoys'

LIFESTYLE / D1

Tondo's little big man, John Kennedy Olano, 10, rewarded apartment unit for saving his 4 siblings from their burning house

METRO / A18

16 YEARS AFTER BAGUIO QUAKE

Hyatt survivor keeps gratitude journal

By Blanche S. Rivera

TODAY, WHEN MARIE THERESE MEDIO-Ortega takes out her gratitude journal—actually a high-tech personal digital assistant everyone else in Hong Kong has—she is likely to jot down: "Thank you for being alive" and mean it more than she would any other day.

It is, after all, the 16th anniversary of the day she thought she would die.

The contents of Ortega's gratitude journal range from her appreciation of a "great sunny day" to a "great walk around Hong Kong" and to "seeing a child's beautiful smile," from thanking God for her "not getting washed up on that boat" to "being physically whole."

Having been spared from death, Ortega strives to live every day as if it were her last, knowing fully well the void that losing people creates.

In the fast-paced, forward-looking world of Hong Kong where Ortega now works as communications and promotions manager

HYATT, A6

'A QUIET ERUPTION' That's how Pinoys describe the state of Mayon Volcano as lava trickles down its slopes for two hours on Saturday even as low clouds obscure the right of the near-perfect, 8,116-foot mountain. Authorities have to prepare for the worst but that may still be weeks away, if it happens at all, says Phivolcs. (Story on Page A2)

AFP

How Muslims, Christians can be peacemakers, good neighbors

By Yuk Contreras

A LITTLE-KNOWN FACT IS THAT THE number of mosques in Metro Manila is 113, and counting.

That's how far and wide the Filipino Muslim community has spread into the capital—a point to consider by those who still think building bridges between Muslims and Christians remains a largely "Mindanao" issue.

But one group has long recognized the scale of this South-to-North migration, and has worked in the last three years to reduce the social frictions that often ensue wherever an Ali or a Muhammad moves into the neighborhood of the Cruzes and Santoses.

Through the Peacemakers' Circle Foun-

HOW MUSLIMS, A4

A2
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
SUNDAY, JULY 16, 2006

WEATHER FORECAST

TODAY: Mostly cloudy with a chance of rain in the afternoon or evening. Winds from the southwest at 15 to 30 kph. Temperature: 24°C to 32°C. Chance of rain: 60 percent.

Second FRONTPAGE

Table of Contents

MAJESTIC MAYON volcano looks serene from a distance as a farmer and his carabao go about their business.

Prepare to evacuate, Mayon residents told

By Ephraim Aguilar
PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

LEGAZPI CITY—RESIDENTS NEAR MT. MAYON HAVE BEEN ADvised to prepare for evacuation in case volcanic activity intensifies after lava began trickling down its slopes in a "mild and quiet eruption" on Friday.

The Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (Phivolcs) raised the volcano's alert level status from level 1 to level 2 at about 6 p.m. on Friday after observing lava trickles in the southeast quadrant of the volcano.

"The sudden raising of the alert level status was due to the volcano's rapid change brought about by mild explosions and detachment of volcanic fragments," said Ed Laguerta, resident volcanologist of the Phivolcs.

Alert level three means there is "relatively high unrest" in the volcano with volcanic quakes and tremors expected to become frequent ahead of eruptions.

The 2,479-meter Mt. Mayon, known for its perfect conical cone and one of the country's 22 active volcanoes, last had a major eruption in July 2001, forcing the evacuation of about 50,000 people. It has erupted about 30 times since 1616.

Phivolcs warned that more explosive eruptions could occur "as gas-rich lavas are expelled" and mentioned residents to stay away from the six-kilometer permanent danger zone (PDZ).

On Saturday, officials extended the PDZ to 7 km on the southeastern slope, where most of the trickles today and other debris have been rolling down since Friday.

Laguerta said the volcano's southeast quadrant was the most critical area as volcanic flows travel to that direction, affecting areas here and in the towns of Daraga, Camalig and Guinobatan.

Evacuation of residents in the highly critical areas will start as soon as Phivolcs raised the alert level to 4, said Cedric Daep, Albay provincial disaster action officer.

Daep said around 7,475 persons or 1,486 families live within the six-kilometer PDZ.

Daep said relief officials were stockpiling food and readying evacuation centers. Daep said groups have been formed to transport evacuees, provide security for abandoned communities, and provide health and sanitation services in the centers.

But officials said they won't order any evacuation yet as they braced for a possible explosive eruption that may take weeks.

"There has been an increased tendency toward a hazardous eruption," Hugo Rafols, a Phivolcs volcanic research analyst said, but stated one condition, major eruption.

"Right now, we are on a mild eruption phase, with high frequency tremors attributed to cracklike by the detached lava from the dome." He predicted a major eruption could take place "within weeks."

On the streets of Legazpi City, capital of Albay province close to the volcano, some residents watched as boulders and other debris cascaded from the craters, entering up forested, lush grey chunks of volcanic dust in their wake.

"What is happening now is a mild and quiet type of eruption," Renato Solidum, chief of Phivolcs said. "What we are watching is the rate by which the magma is being extruded. If it is slower and stronger, it will lead to more hazardous eruptions."

Laguerta said that based on satellite, some thin slice of cars, broke into smaller pieces after being expelled from the crater, piling up about 4 km down to the southeastern slope.

On Friday night, a 1.4-m long streak of lava that looked like "burning embers" was seen slowly trickling down the southeastern slope, said Julius Sornito, an operations officer with the provincial disaster office.

Sornito said an eruption warning system was already in place for quick evacuation of nearby communities, and radio stations would also broadcast emergency calls.

"There is no more business activity" within the 6-7 km danger zone as of Saturday, he added.

Mayon's most violent eruption in 1814 killed more than 1,200 people and buried an entire town in volcanic mud. An eruption in 1993 killed 79 people.

The Philippines is in the Pacific "Ring of Fire," where volcanic activities and earthquakes are common.

In June 1991, Mt. Pinatubo exploded in Zambales in one of the world's biggest volcanic eruptions of the 20th century, killing almost 800 people. *With AP, AFP reports*

San Juan was on his own, says Magdalo comrade

By Nikko Dizon and Norman Bordadora

SAN JUAN

THE MILITARY MUTINOUS TRIO led by Lt. Lawrence San Juan repudiated before he did so its backers said interest.

"It was for his self-preservation. He was making concessions but the group did not expect he would do that in their expense," a source close to the mutinous officers said yesterday.

San Juan, who was captured in February a month after escaping military detention, on Friday announced his links with the rebels who have been charged with the failed coup d'etat July 2003, and admitted that he held talks with communist guerrillas.

San Juan was among the group of young captains and lieutenants, calling themselves the Magdalo group, who briefly occupied the Oakwood Premier hotel in the Makati financial district in July 2003 and demanded the resignation of President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo and other officials.

The military has claimed that the rebel officers have formed a tactical alliance with the Communist Party of the Philippines and its armed group, the New People's Army to oust the President.

The source, quoting the Oakwood mutineers, said the talks that San Juan claimed to have held with the CPP-NPA were his own business and it was not his but him to have dragged the other Magdalo officers into the issue.

"It was his affair, his escape and his subsequent meetings with the communists. What he did did not have the blessing of the Magdalo leaders," the source said.

San Juan "was not operating within the parameters in which the group agreed upon, that is, to submit themselves to the legal process without giving up their advocacy," the source added.

Still surprisingly, some of the Magdalo soldiers resent their former comrade.

"They feel that he's now officially part of the black propaganda against the Magdalo. It affirmed and activated your those remaining in the group to a bad light," the source said.

The defrocked junior officers also believe that San Juan's nearly four months in military confinement may have broken him.

"The most they are the ones who bury out first," the source said, recalling the impassioned speech of San San Juan and another repentant officer, Army Capt. Milo Maestrecampo, made before the media at Oakwood just before they surrendered in 2003.

CPP spokesperson Gregorio Rosal has derided San Juan's claims of an alliance between the group of renegade soldiers and the communist rebels.

"Considering that Lt. Lawrence San Juan has long been held incommunicado by the AFP leaders after and is being held by the neck by Gen. Hermogenes Esperon and his cohorts, all the statements he has made today are suspect and lack credibility," Rosal said in a recorded message in the interim.

Rosal also claimed that before his arrest in Padre Garcia in late February, he had met with top leaders of the NPA's Melito Glor Command under Time Alcantara, a member of the CPP's central committee.

Officials have claimed that the meeting between San San Juan and the Magdalo group had stalled itself with the communists.

In a related development, the Philippine National Police will soon be disarming barangay officials as police authorities to defend local communities from NPA rebels.

Interior Secretary Ronaldo Puno said the deputation of barangay officials is the anti-insurgency campaign is part of the PNP's taking an "active support role" in the military's final push against the communist insurgency.

Puno's announcement followed Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita's declaration on Friday that the President had signed an executive order forming up the coordination between the PNP and barangay executives in the campaign against leftist rebels in the countryside. With Delfin T. Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

BRIBING BISHOPS

Palace seeks end to 'intrigues'

By Jil C. Calasanguan Jr.

MALACAÑANG YESTERDAY APpealed for an end to the intrigues surrounding the cash donations several priests, by the Palace to bishops which it claimed was working more than government support to poor Catholics.

"Allegations of bribery and indiscretion are most unfair to the President and to the members of the bishops. So much innuendo and intrigue have been made on this subject. I hope this silly issue is announced," said Presidential Adviser of Political Affairs Gabriel Claudio.

Claudio maintained that any assistance given by the Palace or government agencies was not meant for political ends. "These are not indiscretion for the Church leaders to side with the government on political issues. Such assistance is intended to uplift the human conditions of people at the community level. The Palace merely recognizes the parish as an effective channel for the extension of government assistance because it is the least prone to graft and self-serving personnel or political agendas," Claudio said.

But Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita believes there are some sectors out to drive a wedge between the Palace and Church that they find to put obstacles in a church matter such as government donations to the Church. "Probably there is somebody out there giving them so-called bribes and claiming he is from Malacañang. But that thing is so fantasy I can't imagine anyone from Malacañang doing that," Ermita said.

At least two bishops had admitted receiving envelopes containing cash from a staff member of Pastora Velelo, Malacañang's administrative officer for religious affairs.

The incidents prompted a militant group yesterday to call on the bishops to denounce Malacañang's attempt to buy off the prelates.

The Pambansang Lakas ng mga Manggagawang ng Pilipinas made the appeal after Diocesan Bishop Jose Manguiran recounted how a Palace emissary slipped two cash-filled envelopes into his hand at the sidelights of the CBCP plenary meeting in Manila last week.

Pambansang said it salutes all the bishops who came out in the open and exposed to the public what it called "a classic act of bribery and betrayal."

Pambansang's national chairwoman Elena Ong said the CBCP could suffer a credibility crisis and should make the necessary steps to clear its name. *With a report from Inverness Aning*

Don't blame us, say Baguio nursing deans

By Vincent Cabreza
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

BAGUIO CITY—THE DEANS of Baguio's nursing schools said they should not be blamed if the exposed about cheating in the October licensure examinations would reduce the number of Filipino nurses being employed abroad.

Maria Grace Lacsamana, dean of the St. Louis University College of Nursing, said they were surprised about the 50 percent backlash on supporting nurses of their campaign against anomalies in the annual licensing tests of the Professional Regulation Commission.

"[The 50 completeness and the chair's resignation] will mark a decrease Philippine nursing [community] of graduates who have cleared to get their license, but this should not be the reason for us to be condemned if the world's medical community starts discussing our issues," said Lacsamana.

As a rally on Tuesday, Lacsamana said cheating up the licensure examinations would jeopardize foreign employers would be getting competent and efficient nurses.

The country sends 10,000 nurses annually to the United States, according to the Department of Labor and Employment.

The Philippine Overseas Employment Administration reported that this number would be on leave to the scandal.

Lawyer Ronnie Coburn, who represented the nursing graduates, said they were initially blamed for the United. Elegado's decision to suspend inspection of migrating Filipino nurses last month.

But the UK out was a unanimous approve of the guidelines that restrict the number of foreign medical employees it could hire, Coburn said.

The school deans said they would not take such a top official of the Philippine Nurses Association to task for the problems there was supporting the exposure because of ongoing negotiations to have the US National Council Licensure Examination for nurses in Manila.

The Nursing PRC chair Leonor Tripoli-Lavoie confirmed there were leakages of test questions and answers that circulated among those of a review center during the June 11 and 12 licensing exams here. A PRC fact-finding team went to the limit to the test manuscripts of two members of the PRC board of nursing.

But Lavoie did not say whether PRC would end the exam results as a consequence.

Thirty-one of the examinees complained to PRC about the cheating, and had asked for the suspension of both the test results and the two members of the nursing board.

Members of PNA in the city and the association of Deans of Philippine Colleges of Nursing (ADPCN) also filed their complaints.

The R.A. Lapuz Review Center in Baguio, however, said it would fully cooperate with PRC's investigation of the incident.

The BAGRC said that the PRC Ethelling committee did not find the review center to have been involved in the leakage.

"BAGRC is confident that its name will soon be finally cleared and vindicated of any suspicion that proving its earlier consistent assertion that it had absolutely no participation in any leakage," it said in a statement.

BAGRC said it supported the PRC's recommendations that administrative charges be filed against those involved and that the results of the June 11 and June 12 be excluded and invalidated. *With a report from Jerome Aning*

PNP: No objection to Erap leave

THE PHILIPPINE NATIONAL POlice has no objections to a request from former President Joseph Estrada that he be allowed to leave his Tanay, Rizal rest house detention center so he can file his demurrer counter to the non-bailable charges against his detainees in Pasay.

In the comment to the court late Thursday, the PNP asked that the Sandiganbayan Special Division cohesive Estrada's leave for Tuesday to give the PNP more time to prepare the necessary security measures.

"We have no objections. We are only asking the court to allow the former President to file that not on Tuesday instead to give us more time to prepare," said Chief Supt. Edgardo Doromal, head of the PNP's Police Security and Protection Office (PSPO).

In a motion filed last Monday before the court hearing plunder and perjury cases against him, Estrada asked to be allowed to personally file a libel suit against former beauty queen Joelle Delano, her mother Hampton and the Manila Standard Today newspaper before the Manila City Prosecutor's Office.

Aside from asking that he be allowed to file the libel suit himself, Estrada also asked the court to allow him to undergo a comprehensive medical check-up at the Ben Jose Hospital Center. *Nelson F. Flores*

Comelec execs hit for snubbing probe

By Jerome Aning and Philip C. Tubeza

COMELEC OFFICIALS QUESTIONING THE power of the Office of the Ombudsman to investigate their involvement in the P1.3-bilg-Pacific automation contract are disrespecting the Supreme Court decision that ordered the probe and violated the dont, according to the main complainant in the case.

Augusto Lagman, the president of the Information Technology Foundation of the Philippines, yesterday assailed the Comelec chair Benjamin Abalos Sr. and Commissioners Resurreccion Borra, Florentino Tuason Jr. for snubbing a hearing on the case before the Ombudsman last Thursday.

Abalos, Borra and Tuason, through their lawyers, argued that being public officials removable only by impeachment, they cannot be investigated by the Ombudsman.

"The Supreme Court ordered the Ombudsman to conduct a probe and it complied. If Abalos and the others do not recognize the Ombudsman's authority, this only means that they also not recognizing the Supreme Court's decision," Lagman said in a phone interview.

Comelec independence

"They could be cited for contempt for disrespecting the Supreme Court's decision. Its lawyer, Abalos and the commissioners should know that the law is what the Supreme Court says it to be," he added.

Contacted by the Inquirer, Abalos argued that "we're only protecting the constitutional independence of the Commission on Elections."

"We're just asserting what we believe is right for the institution. We're saying the lack of jurisdiction [as a way of] protecting the constitutional independence of the Comelec. It's not to us but for the Comelec," he said.

Senate Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel Jr. said the claim that the Ombudsman had no power to investigate constitutional officials like Abalos was "without credibility" in the eyes of the public.

"That defense is ridiculous and unacceptable. They may use all kinds of legal defense, but credibility cannot be defended by a supposed legality device," Pimentel said.

Lagman said Abalos and the other commissioners may be raising the issue of jurisdiction as a "delaying tactic."

On June 30, the Ombudsman recommended Abalos's impeachment, citing his role as the person in charge of the Comelec computerization program.

The Supreme Court gave the Ombudsman another 45 days to finish its investigations and determine the culpability of Abalos, Tuason and other senior election officials.

Lagman recalled that since the scandal broke almost three years ago, Abalos always countered accusations against him by telling critics to just wait for the result of the Ombudsman's investigation.

But now that the Ombudsman has done its investigation, "why is he [Abalos] singing a different tune?" said Lagman.

Abalos said the issue of jurisdiction was just one aspect of the case.

"The people shouldn't think that we're ignoring the Ombudsman. We're not, but we want them [the Ombudsman's investigators] to confirm first the issues we raised," he said.

Jurisprudence

Pimentel said the issue could reach the Supreme Court which he said was "ludicrous" because "it was the Supreme Court that had precisely ordered the Ombudsman to investigate the criminal culpability of Comelec officials and other individuals who were involved in awarding the poll automation contract."

He cited United States jurisprudence that says constitutional officials, before the Presidents and justices of the Supreme Court, can be investigated and criminally charged even before they are impeached by Congress.

"What is more important is not the immunity of removable officials from duty or perjury immunity from suit but the principle that nobody is above the law," Pimentel said.

Asked what he would do if the Ombudsman rejected the Comelec's position, Abalos replied: "If they do not sustain us, then it's okay, let the investigation proceed."

"Personally I'm willing to be investigated precisely because, as I've been saying before, I don't believe that we ever committed anything wrong [regarding the MegaPacific deal]," he said.

Lagman claimed the case against Abalos and the commissioners who approved the contract was "as open-and-shut a case," as the Supreme Court had ruled that illegal acts were committed in the approval of the contract.

Spill the beans, Borra urged

By Philip C. Tubeza

SENATE MINORITY LEADER AQUILINO PIMENTEL JR. yesterday urged Election Commissioner Resurreccion Borra to come some senate session and spill the beans on what he knows about the shelved P1.3 billion MegaPacific poll automation contract and other irregularities in the Commission on Elections.

Pimentel said Commissioner Borra should "wake up and follow the dictates of his conscience" when the Ombudsman made him "a scapegoat lamb" when it singled him out as the principal culprit in the Pandacan scandal and recommended his impeachment.

"Commissioner Borra should realize that he is an expendable member of the Comelec," Pimentel said in a statement.

"He does not have any strong political backing. He does not have political clout. That explains why he alone among the Comelec commissioners is being singled out," he added.

The senator said it "defies logic why only Borra is being blamed for the anomaly" when six other Comelec commissioners, led by Comelec Chair Benjamin Abalos, approved the contract for the purchase of 1,991 automated vote counting machines in MegaPacific.

In fact, Abalos should bear the greatest responsibility for the deal as head of the agency, he added.

Pimentel said there "is a good reason to believe that Borra was made the fall guy after he incurred the ire of Malacañang" when he candidly admitted during a Senate hearing that election fraud took place during the 2004 presidential election, particularly in Mindanao.

He said if Borra agreed to become a state witness, "not only will the poll automation mess be resolved but this will also pave the way for a total cleansing and revamp of the scandal-rocked Comelec."

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Coup . . .

From page A1

Ejército III refers to the 10 senior administration officials, including Cabinet members, who resigned from the government in 2005 and rallied on President Macapagal-Arroyo's step down.

"It is not just a question of giving money, say P25,000 for coffee, but it is really giving aid and comfort... including launching the meeting of safe houses, giving food and other direct support and eventually financing major rallies," Gonzalez said.

Gonzalez has been named by Ms Arroyo as head of a panel to prosecute the perpetrators of the failed Feb. 24 coup.

The military deemed the February plot to unleash a conspiracy of right-wing politicians, army dissidents and left-wing elements to overthrow Ms Arroyo.

'We have names'

"Now we have the names of people who have financed the failed coup ... They are already on our radar screen. We will call them before the National Bureau of Investigation," Gonzalez said.

Gonzalez said he had also talked to two "suicide Cabinet-level officials" who allegedly assembled a meeting of coup plotters in the house of Jose "Peping" Cojuangco in Dasmariñas Village on Feb. 23.

"They said they were there to talk about cock-fighting and sports," he said, adding that the two might actually be "testing the waters" about the alleged coup.

Gonzalez said the two officials, whom he did not identify, should be prosecuted.

"Imagine having Cabinet-level officials attending such conclave. It means those people are traitors and that is punishable by law," he said.

Sleepers around

Although the coup failed, he said the government cannot afford to let its guard down.

"There are sleepers around so we continue to be on guard," he said.

Gonzalez also said that the investigators have not ruled out the incident Lt. Sergeant Jaime Bacarro, member Brig. Gen. Danilo Lim implicated the video tape where he announced his withdrawal of support from Ms Arroyo.

Lim, who has denied involvement in any coup effort, is now detained at a top-security military facility in Camp Bagong Diwa.

The Feb. 24 meeting was where General of the Philippine Affairs leader Pastor "Boy" Tagum supposedly called Lim to confirm that he was set to lead a withdrawal of support from Ms Arroyo the next day, which coincided with the 20th anniversary of the 1986 People Power revolution.

Time article

Time Magazine's Philippine correspondent Bella Gladayan attended the meeting and wrote about it in the magazine but thus far, Gonzalez had failed to extract information from her.

In her report in Time, Gladayan said those who attended the meeting in the house of former President Corazon Aquino's brother were discussing a possible plot for a "withdrawal of support" from the President, including the role of disgruntled soldiers in a "planned movement against the Arroyos," and the formation of a "transition council."

Sayson and Colonango denied Gladayan's report, saying that what they discussed were preparations for the celebration of the John 1 anniversary to be held the following day.

Gonzalez said the investigating panel he now created to conduct a probe of officials from the Armed Forces of the Philippines, the Philippine National Police, the national intelligence council, the national inspectorate office and other offices. Its task is to map out legal action against those behind the failed coup.

Names in laptop computer

A senior police official said the names of four political personalities surfaced in a laptop computer and documents allegedly belonging to the Magdalo group which were seized during last week's raid on their safe house in Quezon City.

Director Jesus Verzosa, chief of the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group, said the police could not divulge their names yet in the absence of more concrete evidence to show their participation in the alleged attempt to topple the government. With a report from Evan G. Adaf Pazzibugan

Bionic . . .

From page A1

parents as well as they telescope that could be installed in the eyes of some elderly patients suffering from age-related macular degeneration.

The first of its kind device is called the Implantable Miniature Telescope. If approved, the pea-sized telescope lens could enable patients to see clearly with the aged-damaged macular and hundreds of thousands of people in the US alone, according to the developer, California-based company Ivantis has not made its patients who are blind.

The Food and Drug Administration's ophthalmic devices panel was meeting Friday to discuss whether to recommend approving the device. The FDA usually follows the recommendations of its outside panels of experts, but isn't required to do so. AP

'Rebels' prepare to meet GMA after plotting

By Donna Z. Pazybugan

AFTER FINALIZING COUP PLANS SET for Feb. 24, Scout Rangers officers sat down with members of the Presidential Security Group (PSG) to discuss President Macapagal-Arroyo's visit in the latter's headquarters set for Feb. 25—the day after the failed coup.

To this day, Ms Arroyo's planned visit to the Scout Rangers headquarters has not pushed through.

Malibu, the same Scout Rangers officers were finalizing plans to bring troops to Kilos in the morning of Feb. 24 to join the Marines and the Philippine National Police Special Action Force and to withdraw support from Ms Arroyo there.

Secret meeting all over

A draft report prepared by an eight-star military fact finding board said that sometime last year, Scout Rangers officers have been secretly meeting in hotels, beach resorts, malls and even in their headquarters in Camp Tomas Aquino, Mapagal, Malacañan palace Ms Arroyo's manor.

According to the report, the key players in the Five Scout Rangers Regiment (FSRR) were former commander Brig. Gen. Danilo Lim, former chief of staff Lt. Col. Nestor Pandilan, battalion commanders Lt. Col. Hermogenes Esperon, Pandilan's operations chief Maj. Jason Aquino, another former operations chief Maj. Oriel Pangsing and Capt. Dante Gaoghat.

As early as Feb. 3, Esperon had presided over a secret meeting among the Scout Rangers at the rear house of Capt. Antonio Trillanes IV in Ayala Alabang Village, Muntinlupa. Earlier, the PSG's Tiger Force, to plan an assault of the military general headquarters in Camp Aguinaldo and the Army headquarters in Fort Bonifacio.

Between Feb. 13 and 22, rebel soldiers had a planned meeting at the Crazy Pork Restaurant in Ayala Alabang. In attendance were a number of Army and Marine officers led by Lim and Marine Col. Ariel Querubin. All of them were purportedly slow to civilian clothes.

"The topic was on the proposed attack. Ariago [to lead the withdrawal of support from Ms Arroyo]," the report said.

Apparently, the Scout Ranger officers decided not to go ahead with the planned assault of the two military camps and instead, opted to ask ousted Scout Chief of Staff Gen. Generoso Senga to lead the withdrawal of support from Ms Arroyo.

Meeting with PSG

On Feb. 22, a number of Scout Rangers officers, including Lim, were already in Metro Manila, having given various excuses to leave their headquarters although the military was under red alert.

In the afternoon of Feb. 22, Lim called up his chief of staff, Pandilan, and told him to rush back to Camp Tomas and provide over a security conference on the President's scheduled visit on Feb. 25.

Ms Arroyo was supposed to witness the signing of a memorandum of agreement between the Manila Banking Corp. and the ousted Forces where the bank would donate a 3,000-hectare lot for the soldiers' housing.

At 2:30 p.m. that day, Scout Ranger officers met down with representatives of the PSG, the Presidential Management Staff and the National Housing Authority on Feb. 24 at 9:30 a.m.

After the conference, Pandilan called up Lim to report on what transpired in the conference and immediately returned to Fort Bonifacio.

Later, when operations asked Pandilan why he left Camp Tomas, he said he was following up his retirement application and that Lim had asked him to bring his "black suit."

Meeting with Senga

Meanwhile, Scout Rangers officers traveled to the coup plot were anxiously waiting for results of Lim and Querubin's talk with Senga.

According to the report, Senga met with Lim and Querubin, who were accompanied by Maj. Gen. Rodrigo Maclang, the deputy chief of staff for intelligence (J2) at 7 p.m. on Feb. 23 in his office at the General Headquarters building in Camp Aguinaldo.

By that time, Lim had already taped a video declaring his withdrawal of support from Ms Arroyo, the report said.

The video was recently leaked last July 5.

After his meeting with Lim and Querubin, Senga took turns leaves before he exercised the major service commander does to counteract the planned meeting.

Asylum could be Bolante's defense vs deportation

From page A1

asked by an associate of Bolante, whom he described as "a common friend," to visit the latter at the detention center.

When asked if the associate was Jose Miguel "Mike" Arroyo, President Macapagal-Arroyo's husband, Bitanajordan paused and said: "It doesn't serve any purpose to name names."

Bolante left the Philippines last year, after testifying repeated summonses in a Senate inquiry into the disbursement of fertilizer funds to administration allies, particularly in the crucial Ms Arroyo's victory in the 2004 presidential election.

On July 7, he flew into Los Angeles from Seoul supposedly carrying a cashier's P1,950 visa, and was arrested by US immigration authorities at the airport.

Mike Arroyo was earlier reported to have left for San Francisco, triggering speculation that his trip was related to Bolante's arrest.

But reliable sources yesterday told the Inquirer in Manila that Mike Arroyo had yet to return to the Philippines after accompanying his wife on his recent official trip to Europe.

One source said it was the First Gentleman's elder son, Pampanga Rep. Juan Miguel "Mikey" Arroyo, who left for San Francisco via Philippine Airlines on July 11.

Mike Arroyo's chief of staff, Jaris Iadiaman, said his boss was in San Francisco to join Mikey and the latter's family on vacation.

Mike Arroyo (Undersecretary Elena) drove to Reno Nevada to raise Francisco on July 5," Iadiaman said, adding that his boss would be back in time for the President's State of the Nation Address on July 24.

Iadiaman referred the inquirer to lawyer Antonio Contreras for details but Contreras, who represented Bolante in the Senate investigation on the fertilizer fund scam and Elike Arroyo's brother, Rep. Ignacio Arroyo, in the "Joc Pidal" inquiry, would not respond to calls on his phone.

No record of Bolante

Elaine Komis, a spokesperson for the US Department of Justice agency that manages immigration courts, said Bolante's name was not in any of their records.

"There's no record [of Bolante] at this time," said Komis, public affairs specialist for the Executive Office for Immigration Review (EOIR), which looks into the cases of persons put in removal proceedings.

Bolante remains in the custody of the US Immigration and Customs Enforcement (USICE) at the San Pedro Immigration Center.

He is undergoing deportation proceedings for charges of immigration violations, according to USICE spokesperson Lori Haley.

"There are no new developments in the case. [Bolante] is still being processed for removal pending review of his case," Haley told the Inquirer yesterday.

Contreras, a top immigration specialist in Los Angeles, said it was possible that Bolante's case had yet to be forwarded to the EOIR because he could be applying for asylum. The EOIR schedules such hearings.

No intention

In Manila, the Department of Foreign Affairs yesterday said it had no intention to keep Bolante's arrest under wraps.

Speaking briefly on Vice President Noli de Castro's radio program, "Ito Ay Sa Iyo Radio," spokesperson Lauro Gilbert Vasquez said embassies had to follow certain procedures in processing information before announcing this to the department.

A spokesperson of the US Consulate General in Los Angeles could not be reached for comment.

How Muslims . . .

From page A1

dation Inc. (PCFI), members's dialogues and other conflict prevention initiatives are being held not only in the war-torn areas of Mindanao but also in the cities where displaced Muslims have settled—but are not widely welcome.

The PCFI found one such place in Barangay 188, Phase 12, in Tala, Caloocan City, where roughly 20 percent of the 5,000-plus resident families are Muslims.

Suburban tension

In a documentary video launched last Wednesday, PCFI founder and executive director Marites Nitura depicted the village as an example of the suburban tension that could arise among residents of different faiths.

The 40-minute video does not show any street riot, verbal spat, or violent image, but is nonetheless disturbing: Christian residents of Tala say on camera what they generally think of their Muslim neighbors in the area.

"I'm afraid of them," a mother-to-be woman.

The new male residents, the Muslims are "probably members of the Abu Sayyaf" and "connected to the terrorists."

Without their knowing, these words have provided a face to published surveys and studies showing how anti-Muslim biases persist in workplaces, schools, and communities at large.

Neither did the Muslim residents interviewed for the documentary hide their own sentiments toward Christians.

"My sense here is to look for jobs, not for trouble," says a male resident in Tala in the 1990s. "But our neighbors think we're up to no good, and I feel that if they can actually make a petition for us to leave, they would have done so long ago."

A Muslim housewife says her husband, who had managed to find a job at a security guard, was fired because his employers began "suspecting him to be a rebel."

A Muslim convert identified in the video as Yusuf complains that "everywhere we go, it is thought that our being ostensibly along with us."

A woman named Hannah says that whenever she leaves the house wearing a veil, she can "tell that we're being talked [calling her] a 'maskot [man]' or an 'Abu Sayyaf.'"

Nightly curfew

Africa, a candidate for a master's degree in theology at the Ateneo de Manila, later shared with the inquirer other realities about Barangay 188 that the video may not have captured.

Before the PCFI conducted projects there, she said, the village had become a place that "even policemen do not enter" and where residents were afraid of being outdoors after dark.

"Gunfire could be heard almost nightly," she said. "Street crimes were rampant but mostly went unreported to the police."

On top of that, she said, the tribe and clan wars among the Muslims themselves sometimes erupted in the area, adding to its insecurity.

For two years starting October 2003, the PCFI conducted weekly interfaith dialogues for both Muslims and Christian residents who were interested.

Aside from these forums that mainly dealt with religion, there was a separate monthly session on building relationships, "free rumor-spreaders," or livelihood skills.

Values and ideals

The interfaith talks were held every Friday and attendance was irregular, but Africa said the convert at least 30 adult residents, 60 percent of those Muslims, who consistently showed up.

Discussions mainly revolved around the "values and ideals" shared by Islam and Christianity as well as their differences.

"How many Muslims don't eat pork? How do I [do two faiths] differ with regard to marriage? Who is born for the Christians and for the Muslims? Things like that," Africa said in reference to the points of discussion.

After two years of dialogue, Barangay 188 is now "a better place," she reported. "Ties were peaceful. Troubles are no longer allowed to enter."

And since neighbors of both faiths had also been taught how to organize, they gained better representation before the local government and were able to secure more street lights and a steady water supply, Africa said.

"You have to ensure that fear and hating the goodness out of people," she said, as though summing up the PCFI's work at Tala.

For the first time

The video launched last week—titled "In the Light of the Crescent Moon"—was a PCFI project in partnership with the Office on Muslim Affairs (OMA)-National Capital Region.

Among its closing images is that of a Christian woman covering a mosque "for the first time in my life"—and having visibly dwelled with the experience.

Another shot shows a Muslim woman teaching a Christian neighbor how to wear the muslong.

"Problems of conflict and violence [between Muslims and Christians] don't only come from Mindanao. Though much less than in Mindanao, they do occur in the more peaceful areas. We are taking the effort to Metro Manila," Africa said.

Expat Pinoys . . .

From page A1

Global Filipino Coalition, the umbrella organization of the 100 overseas online communities of overseas Filipinos. Last week cabinet-level a proposal to the Charter Change Advisory Commission, chaired by Jose Abueva, to allow dual citizens to run for public office. They also sought to recognize the 12-million-strong overseas Filipino voters as a legislative district with direct representation in parliament, if the country changes to a parliamentary system.

Along with Luis Cardenas, editor in chief of Philippine News, the largest Filipino newspaper in the US, Barrios sat down with Abueva and five other members of the Charter Change Commission to discuss their proposal for "direct proportional" representation of voters in Philippine politics. Such a proposal is considered to a parliamentary system.

In a roundtable discussion with the Inquirer newsdesk last week, Global Filipino chair Rene Barrios lamented that the proposal was rejected by the Philippine Congress. Such a provision at present would reduce offshore Pinoys—who pump in over $18 billion (P924 billion) in remittances to the country each year—into third-rate citizens.

"The issue is enshrined in the Philippine Constitution that gives a Filipino, always a Filipino unless you specifically renounce citizenship," Barrios said. "There are those who assert that since global Filipinos have left the country, they should not bother about its politics. We say that our hearts, minds and pocketbooks have never left the country."

"If we have equal rights and we are proposing proportional representation, it means for every 250,000 Filipinos [per local legislative district], we have a legislature. Please give us the same place," he said.

Filipino district

Barrios and Cardenas are members of the worldwide Global Forum on the Constitution whose motto is to ensure a "lasting bond" between Filipinos wherever they are and their motherland.

According to Barrios, Abueva appeared sympathetic to the proposal for direct proportional representation and had asked the coalition to submit background information on other countries using a similar framework.

"It's radical but it's not unjust. The European Union with 23 members has representation (18-20 members) each of a member-state can run for office," Barrios said. "In the Commonwealth of Nations, with 53 member-countries, any citizen of any member can run in the United Kingdom or other country."

The concept of awarding a specific territory, such as Daly City in the US, to partner militants Philippine populace to qualify as a legislative district, the coalition has no objections.

"Rather than limiting specific districts, perhaps Filipinos outside the Philippines could be one homogenous district," Barrios said.

Seeking a voice

The conferences stressed that the coalition's primary goal is not merely filing to gain and nothing to lose under their proposal for inclusion in the legislature. "What we're saying is that since we're Filipinos, please give us the opportunity to be represented in the legislature so that the effect is positive, not negative, because we don't need roads, bridges, hospitals or schools," Barrios said.

"What we need is high-level representation for the protection of rights, security issues such as terrorism, the little petty hatred or unfair hatred at all," he said.

Getting due recognition from their own homeland, Barrios said, would be important even before overseas Filipinos could gain more political clout in their host countries.

"Because we want to change the dimensions voting and calling them to vote right and discouraging to overseas Pinoy votes. They cited, for instance, a province requiring voters to be residents of a province in the Philippines permanently for five years' time before they would be considered as eligible to vote.

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Mas pinatibay ang samahang Pinoy

Few lessons learned from killer quake

LIKE AN ACCORDION: the luxurious Hyatt Terraces Hotel, crumbled after the 7.8 magnitude quake rocked Baguio City. Rescuers worked day and night through the wreckage to look for survivors. Ninety-eight people (employees and guests) died here. RAFFY LERMA

By Vincent Cabreza
Philippine Daily Inquirer, The Northern Luzon Bureau

BAGUIO CITY—THIS JULY 16, 1990 Luzon earthquake is being commemorated here today as a matter of routine, giving the impression that whatever opportunities the tragedy has spawned to improve the summer capital are fleeting or have been squandered.

It was 16 years ago today when two successive quakes rocked Nueva Ecija, sank parts of Dagupan City and nearly wiped out Baguio City from the map.

Almost two decades after the tragedy, Baguio, Dagupan and Cabanatuan—with populations of between 200,000 and 300,000, are still beset by traffic jams, towering buildings, squatting problems and escalating pollution.

But records of a planning congress and testimonies from residents, who participated in rebuilding Baguio, show that the 1990 earthquakes have changed a lot about the city, even if hardly anyone realizes it.

Very conservative

Anna Mendoza, a 56-year-old vendor, said she understands why people have wanted rather forget the horrors of the quake.

"I have been selling here for years, and I notice how people have changed after the quake. Maybe they don't notice it. Baguio has become very conservative. To them, nothing more is threatening, so they fight no more flyovers, they fight to stop lotto and the new malls," Mendoza said.

She is referring to stories of how other Baguio's oldtimers have come out in the streets to protest the development of the City Lotto Bldg. the construction of a flyover near Session Road and the commercialization of many scenery and a casino.

To many people like Mendoza, projects which have caught the locals' ire are signs of progress and, says a city councilor, "an assurance that Baguio has charmed out of the abyss."

Vision for Baguio

Like most people looking at Baguio from the outside, Mendoza is misinterpreting the city's resistance to change.

Baguio's childhood and Ibaloi families believe things should be kept as they are in Baguio, in line with a 1900 city master plan envisioned to restore the original Baguio communities of Ibalois and migrants who had flocked to the city designed by the American colonial government in 1909.

Over 200 civic bodies, social workers and artists are also there "fiduciary" standards when they drafted the "Statements of Vision" for the city during a congress in 1986.

The visions articulated the residents' hope of restoring the city back as a "green, clean, safe environment," where every household enjoys basic social services and the community is built around a disciplined, self-reliant people "proud of their heritage."

Three visions complemented the physical restoration plans developed by European experts and urban planning expert Joaquin Alabastro.

Need to expand

During the quake, Alabastro was the Presidential director of the National Economic and Development Authority who proposed to develop an economic sharing plan for Baguio and neighboring Benguet towns.

His key thesis was that Baguio had breached its capacity to provide adequate road, shelter and water to its growing population and must farm out its economic investments to these urbanizing towns where suburban communities can grow.

The 5000 congress' vision sought to establish the city as primarily an education hub, instead of a tourism destination, and "as a spiritual center by 2000."

But of the visions up that by year 2020, 90 percent of Baguio would be so groomed and only 10 percent of the city would be inhabited.

Limestone foundation

Alabastro said the physical restoration has not kept pace with Baguio's social changes.

Migrants are still allowed to build houses on mountain slopes, blocking natural creeks and drainages, he said.

Buildings have also started to rise higher than the five-story ceiling prepared by urban planning experts concerned about the city's limestone foundation and tender ground that may become apparent after the 1990 quake.

But changes will happen, Alabastro said.

Dagupan, Cabanatuan

Dagupan's experience with liquefaction (when the ground liquifies and sinks) following the earthquake has given residents and officials a painful lesson.

The crumbling roads then rushed the that the land they stood on was unstable and everything could just sink on the watery and sandy ground.

Having learned the lesson, the city government discouraged the construction of buildings more than three stories high, city administrator Rafael Bacani said.

Gerardo Duque, president of the Lyceum Northwestern University, said the earthquake showed that the city was unprepared for a disaster and its hospitals inadequate.

"There were no earthquake drills or any preparations at all," Duque said.

In Nueva Ecija, the earthquake toppled the 4-story building of the Christian College of the Philippines (now defunct) and killed 153 students and teachers.

Provincial officials said the earthquake caught Nueva Ecijanos so prepare for any big disaster by capping rescue and medical volunteers.

Lessons learned

Former Environment Secretary Fulgencio Factoran Jr., chair of the non-agency committee that determined the 1990 earthquake, said "we have learned nothing from the tragic events of July 16 because the infrastructure is the highest degree."

"We have done nothing to develop strategies to prevent injury and damage should another earthquake occur—it would be irresponsibility of the most serious proportions," he said.

Adrian Cristobal of the UP Institute of Urban and Regional Planning said the effects of the July 16 earthquake emphasized the importance of decentralizing and strengthening key utility systems, particularly those connected with the delivery of water, power, transportation and communication services to large urban centers.

"The objective is to minimize the possibility of a total disruption of these services in the event of earthquakes," he said. With reports from Yolanda Sotelo-Fuertes, Phil Sterling Lance Barrera and Benedicto Orejas and Andrew Angay, PIA Central Luzon Desk

Hyatt survivor keeps gratitude journal

"WHERE I WAS TRAPPED," Theresa Maria Ortega, then press relations officer, points to the spot at the Hyatt Hotel that may well have been her graveside. She now keeps an gratitude journal.

for the Peninsula Hotels, survivor of the 1990 earthquake that buried her friends and guests at the Hyatt Terraces Hotel in Baguio City here, took her left.

Ortega can still smile off every detail, every name like they were part of her day's agenda, in a phone interview with the bureau squeezed in between a lunch meeting and a conference call to London, calmly recalls those near-death moments.

'I people gone in 2 minutes'

"I remember very clearly... All the people I left in that room died," she says. Twenty-two foreigners gone in two minutes.

It was around 4 p.m., July 16, 1990. The then 27-year-old Swiss, then with the press relations office of the Hyatt Terraces, had called a meeting with the hotel's banquets and food and beverage (F&B) officers at the executive office on the second floor. They were preparing for the 14th anniversary of the victims, and people were very busy. So busy, then had to move the meeting to 4:30 p.m.

But for Gonzalo, the banquet manager, jokingly shooed Ortega away, insisting she go ahead to the casino manager's office on the third floor. She obliged, not knowing Gonzalo's suggestion saved her life.

"Gonzo treated her that perhaps they wanted me out of the room so they could all talk about me," she says, laughing almost pointedly at the recollection.

Under narra table

Nobody had a chance to talk her long. A magnitude 7.8 quake shook and tortured the whole building. Seconds before the last of crashed, casino manager Augustus Palmeras shouted Ortega under a nearby table. The quake would only last one. The table withstood the beams that collapsed.

From the chaos Rose Ortega crashed to the ground floor unconscious. She spent two hours pinned down by the rubble, with only her face showing.

"I was trying to pray to die. I knew it when I saw my whole life flashed before me. I saw my graduation pictures from St. Theresa's College, and then from UP. I was praying and ready to die," she says.

Suddenly, who was literally two meters first, asked people to look for Ortega. When they saw her condition, they had to find the smallest engineer to get into the crack and pull her out. The guy was Tony Hidalgo, a FPP engineer of Ignorot descent. He searched Ortega out of the rubble.

The first thing Sub-AE asked Ortega was whether he should look for her legs, which he assumed had been cut by the impact.

A rag doll

"I was carried like a rag doll," the 5'8" Ortega recalls. Miraculously, she suffered no concussion, not even bruises. Only a few cuts with bruises.

Ortega was brought to the Bistro garden beside the hotel for first aid before her secretary, Bing Torres, massaged her legs until they started feeling a tingling sensation. In less than an hour, Ortega was back on her feet and, being one of the few hotel managers who had survived, was inducted to oversee the recovery operations and handle the media.

The quake had cut off Baguio from the rest of the province, and rescue and treatment were very difficult. At 7 p.m., she had to call a doctor to operate on a guest whose eyeball had popped out.

Hotel toll: 98 dead

The emergency surgery was done on top of a car, the only light source coming from the headlight of another car.

After two weeks of search, Ryan still closed its casualty count at 98 employees and guests dead. They were among the more than 1,000 people who died in Luzon as a result of the quake.

"I have many people to thank, that's why I'm willing to do this," Ortega says of the interview. She has fiercely spoken about the instinct to her colleagues even after 16 years.

"I want to share with every body that in times of crisis, some people can be so selfless they would think of you first, and I should also be willing to do that for others," she says.

"If you didn't do what you had to do, there's no closure. But if you did your best ... it will not haunt you," she says.

Ortega has since moved on, ending a 11-year stint with the Hyatt Hotel in 2000 to work with 3M Manila. Two weeks ago, she joined The Peninsula Manila. She married her boyfriend from the 1990s, Joey Ortega, and they now have sidaughters in 12, she is still thankful of the miracle that saved her mother.

Ortega has supervised recovery operations and press relations for different disasters, like the fire at the Ryan Hotel in Manila, an earthquake in Japan, a rapel explosion in Guam. Having survived one disaster herself, she has found handling media situations second nature to her.

Whenever she goes, Ortega does not fail to grace church on Sundays, as she will do today. Remembering people for the 12 people she had left in that executive room in the destroyed Hyatt Terraces of Baguio.

"It's part of my journey in life," she says.

Dreams of Vincent

For a while, she had recurrent dreams of one of her friends who died in the quake. Hotel assistant F&B manager Vincent Rodriguez would pop in at the door and tell her to have lunch, as he always did when he was alive and they were both working for Hyatt. Then, the often declined, thing all the work she had to finish.

Surviving the earthquake has given the workaholic Ortega a stronger sense of purpose and balance. She now pauses to appreciate the little things people take for granted. It has also made her more grateful.

For better world

"I try to make sure things are done, even in ending an argument with people plus love or finding a resolution to something," she says. "If I've annoyed somebody in doing my job, which until be avoided, I try to make amends before the day ends."

Ortega is a senior 33, Amigahi church in Hong Kong and close volunteer work for the Philippine consulate, helping to outreach programs for domestic helpers, counseling, teaching them small skills. She was also a volunteer for the recovery from disasters coming.

"Time is the most valuable asset I have and the most little I can share... as I try to do things that make me or the community whole," she says. "I always feel that if you can convince others to do most, the world will be a better place."

What to do in case an earthquake hits

By Cyril L. Bonabenta
PhilSearch

YOU ARE INSIDE A BUILDING when the earthquake strikes. What should you do?

The best thing to do is to duck, cover and hold, says Renato Solidum, chief of the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology. You can take cover under a sturdy table or in a doorway to shield yourself from falling objects.

When under a table, hold on to it to make sure it does not move away from you, Solidum adds. But should keep your eyes open and stay alert to avoid getting hit by falling or sliding objects.

If there is no table or doorway nearby, you can either get a door or any furniture that can cover your head, or use your arms as protection.

'Triangle of life'

Solidum urges people not to believe the "Triangle of Life" article circulating in the Internet. The article claims that during an earthquake, people should curl up in a fetal position beside—not under—objects like tables, supposedly because "the weight of the ceilings falling upon the objects or furniture ... creates those objects leaving a space or vacuum on them."

Solidum explains this method assumes that ceilings collapse in one piece. He stresses that in most cases, ceilings collapse piece by piece. It is those falling pieces that people should avoid.

He also disputes the article's claim that "people who get under objects, like desks or cars, are always crushed." Solidum cites the case of Senia Bees, wife of the late Gen. Fidel Ramos, who survived the 1990 earthquake by going under a table.

What if an earthquake occurs while you are in a wide building?

"The stairs, stairs and hold method will applies. Trying to get out of the building is dangerous, with objects falling and sliding every where," Solidum says.

Other tips

There are other tips taken from Phivolcs, the National Emergency Management Agency, www.earthquakesolutions.com and the Automobile Club of Southern California.

If you are inside a building:

- Stay inside and away from your head with your arms. Protect yourself from falling debris by positioning yourself in a strongly-supported doorway, under a sturdy table or against an inside wall within three arms-length of you. If you cannot find a table or doorway immediately, cover your head with your arms then crouch in an inside corner. Stay there until the shaking stops.

Center of room

- However, when a house falls over during an earthquake, doorways are frequently more impacted than other areas of the house. In severe earthquakes, the center of the room is usually a safer place than doorways. There are exceptions to this. People in an outdoor and brick buildings in a building with two or more stories, or in an apartment that may explode due to heavy weight should not consider the middle of the floor as a safe place.
- Stay away from glass, windows, mirrors, outside doors and walls, and anything that can fall.
- Do not use elevators.

If you are outside:

- Go to an open area. Move away from buildings, trees, power lines and other structures that may fall. Stay away from buildings with glass panes.

On the road

- When driving, decrease speed gradually and pull to the side of the road and stop. Avoid stopping near buildings, trees and utility wires. Do not attempt to cross bridges or overpasses. Stay inside the vehicle and keep your seatbelt fastened.
- If you are on a mountain, move away from steep slopes.
- If you are along the shore, run toward higher ground.

When trapped under debris:

- Do not light a match. Do not move about or kick up dust.
- Cover your mouth with a piece of cloth.
- Tap on a pipe or wall so rescuers can locate you. Use a whistle if available. Shout only as a last resort, because you might inhale dangerous amounts of dust.

It'll be wet and dreary

THE WEATHER BUREAU Pagasa reported monsoon rains to continue on Luzon and the western sections of northern and central Luzon because of the southwest monsoon.

Pagasa likewise issued a wet and dreary Sunday for the rest of the country, expecting partly cloudy skies with isolated rainshowers or thunderstorms.

Moderate to strong winds blowing from the southwest will prevail over northern and western Luzon and the coastal waters along these areas will be moderate to rough, Pagasa said. It is weather bulletin issued at 5 p.m. yesterday.

Elsewhere, winds will be light to moderate blowing from the east and southeast with slight to moderate seas, it added.

Manila Bay will be slight to moderate.

Temperature range will be from 24 degrees Celsius to 29.9 degrees Celsius.

Sunrise today will be at 5:35 a.m. Sunset will be at 6:29 p.m.

Norman Bordadora

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DepEd protesters say they're willing to meet with Lapus

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION employees backing the appointment of incoming Education Secretary Jesli Lapus are willing to discuss issues with him—but only after their nationwide protest actions on Sunday.

"The dialogue will happen after our nationwide rally," Deped-National Employees' Union president Domingo Alidon said yesterday. He said union members and teachers would hold simultaneous rallies during their lunch break on Sunday, gathering in at least 117 regional and 150 division offices all over the country.

Lapus had earlier expressed willingness to meet with the protesters, saying that with his credentials, he did not understand the objection to his appointment.

Nothing personal

But Alidon said in a phone interview: "We have nothing personal against Lapus. We just don't want a politician. We want an educator to be the next secretary."

He said he and his colleagues had had "bad experiences" with previous education secretaries who were also politicians, and cited the late Raul Roco as an example.

"Politicians tend to be dictatorial. There is also the risk of department funds being used for political purposes," he said.

The union wants Deped offices in Cagayan de Oro and Iligan to be made into regional offices. Lapus' predecessor Edilberto de Jesus had said the plan was being studied.

Alidon said, however, that the union was not entirely closing its door on Lapus.

"We should show us a plan of action. He should be sincere. His previous statements were unsupportive to us employees," Alidon said.

'Using Hidalgo'

In a press conference last week, Lapus asked the Deped employees "to spare the department from the crossfire of politics."

He said that he was puzzled by the DepEd opposition, and that the protesters could just be "using Mr. Hidalgo for their own agenda."

He added that Hidalgo had agreed to step on an undersecretary.

Hidalgo had told the Inquirer that she would stay for two more months to ensure a smooth transition and the continuity of programs.

As the same press conference, Lapus categorically denied plans of sacking top officials just over one year. He said he would rather stay at the DepEd for at least three years.

But the union appeared determined to believe Lapus, especially when he, according to Alidon, denied having lobbied for the post that some persons in a reward from President Macapagal-Arroyo.

Lapus, who described himself as a "management expert," openheartedly the passage of Mr Arroyo's fiscal reforms in Congress two years ago.

HOLIDAY: Sultan Bolkiah (right) comes to pray, (upon) his troops in Bandar Seri Begawan, Saturday on his 60th birthday. The celebrations were attended by world leaders that include President Macapagal-Arroyo, shown (next to) upon her departure from Manila.

Brunei must diversify – Sultan

BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN—BRUNEI'S Sultan Hassanal Bolkiah said his birthday speech Saturday to call for economic diversification to ensure continued prosperity in the tiny oil-rich nation.

More than 2,000 foreign and local guests, including President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, gathered in a 1,700-room palace for the speech by the sultan, once listed as the world's richest man.

"Among the more important things is to ensure that the reserves of oil and gas can continue to be enjoyed by the people," the sultan said.

"Along with that, economic diversification is also important for strengthening the country's survival, indirectly by an increase in foreign investments and a more eco-friendly policy."

The sultan, one of the world's longest-reigning monarchs who is also prime minister, defense minister, finance minister and head of Islam, spoke without a teleprompter in front of a podium canopy where his two sons sat.

Hassanal last year married Malaysian television news presenter Azrinaz Mazlan Hakim, 26. She bore him a son, his 11th child, last month.

The nation's celebrations were to continue into the evening with a state banquet attended by the leaders of the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Cambodia—and about 10,000 other guests, a government spokesman said.

The sultan was crowned on Aug. 1, 1968 and Brunei achieved full independence from Britain on Jan. 1, 1984.

Brunei, which occupies a sliver of Borneo island, is Southeast Asia's third largest oil producer. It is also the world's fourth-largest producer of liquefied natural gas.

Official figures say the country had a population of about 381,000 in 2002, and the mineral wealth has brought the citizens one of the highest per capita incomes in Asia.

There is no personal income tax, and education and healthcare are free. Mansions, cars and even pilgrimages to Mecca are subsidized.

Hassanal's Malay Muslim absolute monarchy dates back to the 14th century when his ancestors nominally controlled all of Borneo island and some parts of the Philippines' Sulu Islands, according to official history.

Thousands of people, including school children wearing flags, lined the streets to watch the sultan's cavalcade as he arrived at a city stadium for a ceremony earlier on Saturday.

"In Brunei, all men like the Sultan," Mohammad Akram Hussain, 34, said smiling beside the roadside earlier Saturday while he waited for the monarch's thrills there. AFP

GMA going to Hawaii next

PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-ARROYO yesterday listed her plans to go to Hawaii later this year to join the centennial celebration commemorating the arrival of the first Filipino workers in this island-state.

The President listed her travel plans to her meeting with over 300 guests in Malacañang yesterday made up of Philippine ambassadors and consul-generals and leaders of Filipino communities in the US and Canada.

Hawaii is normally in the midst of a year-long Filipino Centennial celebration to commemorate the legacy of the first 170 Filipino laborers or farm workers.

The President put the nearly half-a-hundred Filipinos before the bill for a three-day overseas trip to attend the 60th birthday celebrations of Brunei's ruling Hassanal Bolkiah and meet Libyan leader Moammar Gadhafi in a two-day state visit to Libya.

She told her audience that the "Philippines was in the mainstream of the political, economic and economic take-off" as she touted them to take advantage of the "innumerable business and investment opportunities worth exploring in the country."

Docs lament health budget, poor education, 'brain drain'

By Hazel P. Villa
PDI Visayas Bureau

ILOILO CITY—THE PHILIPPINE College of Physicians (PCP) has accused the state of top health problems, such as the health sector's 1 percent share of the government budget, the exodus abroad of Filipino physicians and nurses, and the dismal quality of medical education.

According to the umbrella organization of internists with 8,000 members and 78 accredited training hospitals nationwide, the Philippines is so swamped with problems related to public health and the medical system that it is hard put to identify the No. 1 health issue.

Dr. Rene Jimenez, PCP national president, cited cardiovascular and pulmonary diseases as the leading cause of morbidity and mortality among Filipinos. He said there was an immediate need for a national program on preventive health care.

"The problem of health is the problem of dilatory areas of governments, but here can you never with a budget of 1 percent for health care?" said Dr. Anthony Leachon, chair of the PCP cluster committees and the committee on internal communications.

The World Health Organization recommends a health budget of 5 percent for Third World countries such as the Philippines.

5 major issues

Jimenez and Leachon were speakers at the launch of a partnership between the PCP Panay Chapter and the Philippine Science High School Western Visayas last July 8 at the PSHS campus in Jaro.

In a press conference called "The Philippine Health Situation and PCP's Advocacy and General Directions Toward Improving Health Care in the Country," the two doctors listed off the five major health care issues:

+ The close departure of Filipino physicians and nurses, with 4,000 physicians migrating as nurses since the year 2000, and 1,500 physicians now enrolled in nursing schools all over the country.

+ The shortcoming quality of medical education, with a 20-percent passing rate in the conduct of National Medical Admission Test examinees despite the abundance of medical schools (86).

The PCP traced the deterioration to : admission of poor-quality students; lack of competent full-time faculty members; too few recognizing qualified ones from teaching; inadequate facilities and clinical exposure; antiquated systems of education and examinations; and harsh financial realities confronting medical schools.

"There is also a dereliction of duty on the part of the Commission on Higher Education and other government agencies, as well as the indifference and inattentiveness of medical associations and medical colleges to provide effective leadership," the doctors said.

Luz quits Namfrel

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

FOR ALMOST A DECADE, BUSINESSMAN Guillermo Luz served as secretary general for the election watchdog National Movement for Free Elections.

But months after joining the call last year for President Macapagal-Arroyo to resign, Luz finally resigned from Namfrel.

"I did not accept his resignation at first," Namfrel national chair Jose Concepcion Jr. told the Inquirer. "But he said he felt there were other reasons he had to attend to," Concepcion added.

Luz filed his resignation letter as early as Jan. 17. But Concepcion announced the change to all his volunteers through a memorandum only last month.

Luz was with Namfrel since the 1995 elections until the controversial 2004 elections, when he was accused by Sen. Aquilino Pimentel of being a Canadian citizen. He neither confirmed nor denied the accusation.

Following the withdrawal of support of at least 10 cabinet members and appointees of Ms Arroyo last year (tagged as the Hyatt 10), Luz and the Makati Business Club also joined calls for Ms Arroyo's resignation.

But Concepcion said Luz did not mention his political position as a reason for resigning from Namfrel, which is already preparing its file for accreditation before the Commission on Elections to be able to hold another quick count for the elections next year.

The national council of the poll watchdog has appointed Emmanuel Magbual as the new secretary general.

Magbual has been working for Namfrel since 1986 as deputy secretary general. He has also participated as election monitoring trainer and observer in several countries in Asia, Europe, America and Africa, Concepcion also said in his memorandum.

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THE DAILY GOSPEL

Monday, July 10, 2006
15th Monday in Ordinary Time
1st Reading: Amos 7:12-15

Call of Amos

Amaziah then said to Amos, "Off with you, seer, go flee to the land of Judah; there you may earn your bread by prophesying. But never again prophesy at Bethel for it is a royal sanctuary and a national shrine."

Amos replied to Amaziah, "I am not a prophet or one of the fellow-prophets; I am a herdsman of sheep and a dresser of sycamores instead. But Yahweh took me from shepherding the flock and said to me: Go, prophesy to my people Israel."

2nd Reading: Ephesians 1:3-14 (or 1:3-10)

Christ's cosmic importance

Blessed be God, the Father of Christ Jesus our Lord,

who in Christ has blessed us from heaven with every spiritual blessing.

For Christ, as in Christ before the creation of the world

to be holy and without sin in his presence.

From eternity he destined us in love

to be his sons and daughters through Christ Jesus,

thus fulfilling his free and generous will.

That generous bless-

ing for loving kindness which he poured on us in his Beloved

might finally receive all glory and praise.

We in Christ on whom kindness, sealed by his blood,

and forgiveness of our sins,

in this opulent display of generous of his grace,

which he lavished on us.

In all wisdom and understanding,

and has made known to us his mysterious designs,

in accordance with his loving kindness in Christ.

In him and under him God wanted to unify,

when the fullness of time had come,

everything in heaven and on earth.

By a decree of him who disposes all things according to his own plan and decision

we, the Jews, have been chosen and called and we were marking the Messiah.

So the praise of his glory.

You, on hearing the word of truth,

the Gospel that saves you,

have believed in him.

And, as promised, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit,

the first pledge of what we shall receive,

as the way to our deliverance as a people of God.

So the praise of his glory.

Gospel: Mark 6:7-13

Apostolic instruction

Jesus called the Twelve to him and began to send them out two by two, giving them authority over evil spirits. He told them to take nothing for the journey except a staff; no food, no bag, no money in their belts. They were to wear sandals and were not to take on two tunics.

And he added, 'In whatever house you are welcomed, stay there until you leave the place. If any place does not receive you and the people refuse to listen to you, leave after shaking the dust off your feet. It will be a witness against them.'

So they set out to proclaim that men was the time to repent. They drove out many demons and healed many sick people by anointing them.

Commentary

Amos is rejected by the priests and he claims he was only a shepherd. But it is the Lord who took him from the flock and sent him to God's people. God's word is his own, meaning and power then. We too have been chosen by God. In Jesus Christ, in our baptism, to live the wisdom of understanding of the mystery of God's Word and to bring all to communion in Christ. This is who we were sealed in the Spirit. And in our words as forth to live who are radical sign of the presence of God in the world. We are to go two by two, go with only what we need for the day, live on the hospitality of others, and preach repentance. We are to be who we are, we are always to needed repentance and that is the core of our baptism. In this always more in intentional Jesus' obedience to God.

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

OPINION

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Howling wilderness

IT IS TIME, AGAIN, TO UPDATE EURIPIDES. THOSE whom the gods wish to destroy, they first answer with rumors. In the case of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines, the gods' method of choice was simple and familiar enough: the old envelope trick.

EDITORIAL

They or their messengers ("casual looking" men, a CBCP insider described those modern-day versions of Hermes) handed out envelopes during the CBCP plenary assembly last week, to bishops who were either too deep in prayer or were too trusting of their fellowmen or (the likeliest explanation) were unaccountably forgetful of the lessons of the institutional. Most of the envelopes, as far as we can tell, has since been returned as will be, since—but the damning image of bribed bishops has already stuck.

That is the sorry truth. Even if some of the envelopes never found a bishop's mitre, the damage has already been done. Even if the table talk at the "victory" dinner Palace officials hosted for some bishops immediately after the assembly turned out to be inconsequential, suspicion has already been cast. Now, the perception is unfortunately indeed: Even bishops, in Catholic faith the direct successors of the 12 apostles, are vulnerable to envelopes with money.

We cannot believe that this state of affairs is mere happenstance. As one of the more vocal prelates said during crusader Archbishop Oscar Cruz...suggested last week, the bishops' moral authority is the CBCP's "one and only source of influence." The surest way for Malacañang to counter that authority is to pollute the source.

Insinuation, innuendo, implication: All it takes to erode the moral high ground is to suggest that this vantage point is built not on stone but on shifting (even shifty) sand.

Think about it. The entire argument for counting "livelihood" funds through bishops rests on faint premise: That bishops are damned by being trained like congressmen and other political operatives, who need cash gifts to oil the levels of power and patronage. After all, the argument continues, the bishops know their people's needs better than politicians; why not ensure aid to dioceses through them?

Then are the bishops compromised—through a corrupting scheme disguised as an act of charity.

This deliberate undermining of the bishops' moral authority forces us to ask the essential question: Is the embarrassing of national institutions a principal policy of the Arroyo administration?

Consider the Constitution on elections. Under the extraordinarily obtuse chairmanship of Benjamin Abalos, the administration's pre-election appointees have managed to destroy the commission's credibility. President Macapagal-Arroyo's belated admission of a "lapse in judgment" when she acknowledged calling an election executive in 2004 to ostensibly protect her vote, has only deepened public skepticism about the fairness of the election process.

Or consider the armed services. The incoming chief of staff of the Armed Forces is a "Garci" general—that is to say one of several high-ranking officials who are mentioned in the Gamboa wiretaps as participants in the alleged election fraud of 2004. As a result of this perception and of sub- or incapitable developments in the AFP, such as the much-delayed Mayuga report, the Armed Forces today seems as politicized as the early years of the Marcos regime.

Consider the Ombudsman, whose office was one of the great innovations included in the 1987 Constitution. Granted extraordinary powers by the Charter's framers, today the Ombudsman under Ms Arroyo seems largely impotent, unable to outmaneuver the will to crush down on corruption at the highest levels of government.

Or consider the Senate. Designed to serve as a check on presidential power, the one chamber of Congress that seems to have the will to hold the President to account has been severely scrutinized and repeatedly ignored by Malacañang. Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez's brazen assemblyingness to act on the Senate's arrest warrants against alleged fertilizer scam mastermind Jocelyn Bolante is only one of many possible proofs that, for the administration, the Senate is no longer a part of government.

Consider these and other compromised institutions, and the suspicion arises: In order to survive until the end of her term, the President seems ready to bring the country's institutions down to the level of the discredited presidency That would we lose? It is the winds howling, in an increasingly empty wilderness.

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Just a pale copy

SEPARATE OPINION

Augusto A. Cruz

THE UNITED STATES PHYSICALLY SURGERED in 1898 and made our country its colony until 1946. In the process, it developed in us a mammoth subsistency complex that made our people idolize practically everything American.

Early during our subjugation, a pro-bird Filipino appointed to the Taft Philippine Commission durability declared: "I am an American and all the money in the Philippines...for all the light and the sun I consider American." That admirable tradition continues to this day to disgrace many of our countrymen who are disenchanted to be called the Yankee's "little brown brothers."

Malolos opposed American rule and was dispersed to Guam. Once we entered the last chapter of the nationalistic Spanish-Colonial Mood, who witnessed. But few followed those stalwart leaders, preferring a more convenient system enrolled with the foreign carpetbaggers.

Soon after we became a republic, the new President Roxas hastingly committed the Philippines as follows in "the glittering wake of America's bounty were advised by night's grave breaks his studies crash the waves of fear."

Recto, the Laurels, Tañadas, Diokno and other nationalists protested but were ignored. Everybody should be an imitator. The President of the Philippines always takes care to act in this phrase: the President of the United States. Congress patterns many of its bills after American statutes, and the Supreme Court still follows American jurisprudence like a lower court.

Operating particularly of our highest tribunal, I often criticized my colleagues for their reliance on—if not in fact allegiance to—the decisions of American jurists in resolving our own cases with their different local setting. I said we should make up our own minds according to our own needs, our own customs and traditions, and even our idiosyncrasies. But thinking for ourselves was rejected as unintelligent.

With many of our people it was follow the leaders, or maybe it was the other way 'round. The grave cancer has become the hostile obsession of Filipinos impatient to leave their native land for the greener pastures of California. A medical exam represents home base left to be a nurse in America; a nephew of mine who vowed to serve our people here is earning stuffed-roll dollars there as an anesthesiologist.

But it is not only for financial reasons that many Filipinos are enamored by America. The United States is to them the best place to live and its people are the best people on earth. The entertainers are especially attractive. No one can beat Elvis Presley and Marilyn Monroe and all those beautiful people in Hollywood and Broadway.

Even the bus boys who can no longer earn a living there are readily welcomed here as much worse of our dollar reserves. The Philippines is a willing dumping ground for the rejects in the United States, including the citizens who are suddenly and overwhelming Batasan with their intrepid American counterparts in action.

Sometime ago I noted that we have followed the Americans in celebrating Mother's Day and Father's Day, and on the same dates they have chosen for these occasions. We could at least have fixed different dates for our celebrations from among all of the 365 days in the year, but we did not. That would have been disloyal to America.

I also observed that we have produced a Philippine Fe to mirror the American Penelope and, soon to open, there will be a version for the Philippine Idol similar to the American Idol in the land of the bold. During the '70s, we had our boy pin-ups in the boondocks of barangays, with local gunfighters costumed a la Wyatt Earp of the Tilt Corral.

There must also be a Halloween in this tropical Philippines to follow the American holiday except that ours will have only artificial ones. We must have our phantoms, too, but of the American brand—in "Hilloween" or "Halloweenggit." For there are no lizards! The demons must be like the headless horseman that terrified Ichabod Crane but they will not frighten the children here, for a change, because our fruit is will protect them.

And how about the Moslem among our countrymen? Can they continue to adhere to as much as to look as American as possible? The test result is ludicrous and also pathetic. The mother tongue of our fast-emerging bilingual are uttered throughout the world, but our women prefer to be pale because that is how their American idols look. Those who maintain brown skins would rather be like their instructor-naturally tanned admirers, who don't know when they're abroad.

Our people have much to be proud of but would rather ape other peoples. The tissues are not wonderful ones. Invite our countrymen that we don't realize it. Let's recognize and harness our distinctive instead of simply imitating those of another country with a different culture from ours. It is always best to be original rather than just a pale copy.

Lean—and mean

MOMENTS

Fr. Jerry M. Orbos, SVD

ACCORDING TO A TEXT MESSAGE I RECEIVED, it is not true that fast makes you fat. On the contrary, how makes you lean...lean on walk, lean on desert and lean on people.

* * *

In today's Gospel (Mk. 6, 7-13), Jesus tells His disciples to lean not on such as **worldly resources and provisions in their** missionary but more on God's providence and power. He instructs His disciples to be lean—no food, no sack, no money in their belts, and not even a second tunic in their possession. **A disciple has to travel light,** so that he/she can become an effective witness and "light of the world."

* * *

I'm in-out, lean is in. As it was in Jesus' time, so it is in our time—disciples must not be encumbered by excess baggage and concerns or they go about their ministry. Once a disciple becomes "heavy," he/she loses his/her effectiveness and credibility. When people no longer see Jesus in you and me, it only means that we have ceased to become "salt of the earth" and "light of the world" because we have taken the road of comfort and easy compromise.

* * *

We are to preach the message of repentance. As prophets, we are to speak truthfully no matter who gets hurt or offended. We must not be bought, neither must we be silenced by gifts and favors. We must be faithful to Christ's message, and not adulterate it with our own agenda or inclinations. We must preach Christ as boldly that if we are rejected, we must "shake off our feet in testimony against them." If our message has lost its sting, maybe it is because we are no longer lean and, for fear of rejection, are no longer mean.

* * *

The "dynamics of giving and receiving" comes to bear again with the recent allegations about the giving of envelopes and favors to our bishops. If the allegations are true, shame on those who thought they could buy the bishops and also on those who gave even the slightest impression that they could be bought. The message of Christ entailed a non-negotiable, no-nonsense, or-out of mission.

* * *

There are times when a shepherd must give out clear instructions and directives, not just exclamations, to his flock. When there are hungry wolves all around, the shepherd must see his staff to ward off the enemy, and to corner, direct and lead his flock. We need to hear clear marching orders especially when we are in close and present danger.

* * *

A text message I received says: "When the cancels a date, it is because she has to; if he cancels a date, it is because he has met." This underlines the fact that serving two masters or two timing is not only dangerous to one's spiritual health; it also kills the spirit. May we all be steadfast and focused in our commitment to the Gospel values of love, sacrifice, honoring truth and service.

* * *

I just visited Ms Adelaida Bendor in Angeles City. She is the mother of Fr. Milan Bendor, SVD, our young missionary in near-born East Timor. One can never imagine the anguish of Mama Del mourning about the safety of her son. When touched, my son when she said: "Seeing you and embracing you is like seeing and embracing my son Allan." True. We need others to lean on as we journey on. May we be open and available when others need someone to lean on.

* * *

Keep your eyes on Jesus, the founder of Je-

sus, we must be focused not on ourselves, for therein lies the danger of pride in our so-called achievements and the danger of discouragement in our weaknesses. Neither must we focus on the choices or fears of people around us, for always there will be people who will welcome or reject us and our message. It is the Lord whom we serve. Only Jesus. Always Jesus.

* * *

By the way, have you noticed how the trees and the vegetables in our country continue to **mature no matter all the efforts to contain** or meddle them? No amount of money, no amount of power and position can stop the **truth from surfacing. Truth may be delayed** or hidden for a while, but, it will surely surface. Pity the liars. They are always on guard. They are always scared. Our message is there. Learn from God, and lean on God.

* * *

"Lord, may everything we do begin with your inspiration, continue with your help and reach its fulness under your guidance, Amen." If you can sincerely say this prayer about everything you do, then blessed are you.

* * *

We are all invited to do our mission for the Lord on this earth, in this short life. Again, what would it profit us if we gained the whole world, but in the end we lose our soul? And even now, what are we losing in our pursuit for worldly fame, riches and power? Some of us are already losing our name, our values, our principles, our loved ones, our peace, our health. Is it worth it all? What for?

* * *

Remember: Stay lean. Stay clean. Then you can say what you mean. Live in such a way so that nothing and no one can stop you from saying what you mean. Amen!

* * *

A prayer to watch this Lord:
Lord, help me to lean on you, and not on my own understanding. Amen.

They are not criminals

REVEILLE

Ramon J. Farolan

WHEN WE RETURNED HOME FROM AN extended visit abroad, the first newspaper I picked up carried the photos of several men, dressed in yellow T-shirts, being presented to the media by AFP chief-of-staff Gen. Generoso Senga. He was flanked by Philippine National Police chief Police Director General Oscar Calderon and Army commander Lt. Gen. Hermogenes Esperon. A quick glance at my TV set showed the same scene: men in yellow T-shirts being paraded before the media.

For a while, I thought it was a usual coverage of arrested suspects being presented by police officials who are eager to show they are on the ball, to the President or some Cabinet functionary. Sometimes, these suspects are presented as suspected members of some crime syndicate or other. On other times, they are captured bank robbers, car thieves or even rapists.) Then I realized that the men in yellow T-shirts were junior officers of the Magdalo group who had been arrested in an early morning raid in Quezon City. The news report on their capture noted that asserted firearms, hand grenades and explosives were found in the safehouse the raid house where the officers were staying. A blueprint of the Batasan Pambansa complex was also found among the documents recovered from the group. Its coincidence, President Macapagal-Arroyo is scheduled to deliver her State-of-the-Nation Address (Sona) at the Batasan on July 24.

Let me make a few observations on this event.

The junior officers arrested that day are not criminals. They do not deserve to be treated as such, and I was appalled that the AFP chief of staff, the PNP chief and the Army commander allowed themselves to be used in a photo-opportunity that degraded and destroyed the dignity of these young officers. (Have this type of photo op for black leftists, gambling lords or rapists?) Whatever they have done, these officers are your younger brothers. With all the power in your hands, you can discipline and mete out punishment if the charges against them are proven, but there is no need to humiliate and diminish them as human beings and fellow officers. Their actions which began with the Oakwood mutiny do not stem from a desire for personal gain or power. They were mainly from having seen the injustice and corruption in our society which has led to a growing desire for meaningful change.

If the idea of subjecting these officers to shame and ridicule is to discourage others from taking a similar path, let me suggest that such action could have the opposite effect; it could instead engender resentment, bitterness and hostility among others in the organization.

As to the firearms, explosives and a Batasan blueprint found in the possession of these officers, it would be wise for us to maintain a healthy skepticism in the face of extensive press access. We must be conditioning the minds of our people. As the old saying goes—planting is to answer her, planting evidence is man's to reap. I can see suggesting that these pieces of evidence were planted, but these days one can never be sure of anything. We must also be wary of the sudden changes of heart among captured officers, like the case of Army Lt. Lawrence Kan (nee Antonio Trillanes.) I am reminded of Charles Maechling's 2002 book, The Kennedy Foundation's "Profiles in Courage" award. Here said "Cruelty disfigures our national character. It is incompatible with our Constitutional order, with our laws, and with our most prized values. Cruelty can be an effective instrument in destroying human dignity and there is no moral decline first between one and the other."

Respected journalists, members of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines and the Philippine Military Academy Alumni Association must be allowed regular visits and access to these officers.

* * *

The appointment of Army Chief Lt. Gen. Hermogenes Esperon Jr. as AFP chief of staff was extremely announced by Malacañang. Five months ago, in order of the seniority system, Esperon would be the next in the line after AFP chief. I would have wanted to see Air Force Commander Lt. Gen. Jose Reyes named to the post, considering his seniority and experience. Joe Reyes got his third star B.L. Gen.) ahead of Esperon. He also became the junior commander among the three Esperon, Air belongs to PMA (Class '71. Esperon comes from PMA (Class '73. By all measures of determining factors in the No. 1 man in the armed forces. His educational qualifications and military background and performances in the service are of the highest order.

Earlier, AFP Force announcement Lt. Gen. Benjamin Defensor became AFP chief of staff as did Lt. Gen. Arnulfo Acedera during FVR's time. There is no reason why an Air Force man should not be AFP chief of staff (having said all these, we are not). Force that appointment to the position of AFP chief is the prerogative of the Commander in Chief. But, as the Inquirer editorial last Friday pointed out: "Esperon's promotion will neither lessen calm or even reconciliation within the ranks of a military agitated by allegations of senior officers participating in electoral fraud. It will not help incumbent volunteers with Congress or assuage the fears, rightly or wrongly, in certain quarters that the administration is showing a marked interest in pressing authoritarian solutions to its political problems. It will not enhance the prestige of the Armed Forces or inspire confidence in the united officers corps."

How to go spelunking

REBEL WITHOUT A CLUE

Patricia Evangelista

SAMAR—SPELUNKING (OR CAVING) IS THE recreational sport of cave exploration. The challenges of the sport depend on the cave being visited, but they often include the negotiation of pitches, squeezes and water. Climbing or crawling to other necessary, and ropes are used extensively. It has recently come to the forefront of extreme sport by some, requiring protective wear and equipment.

"What I have learned (While Spelunking in Samar)":

1. Do not wear a short, mini-skirted cotton sundress with a plunging neckline. Any subtle lowly on a mannequin in the middle of a mall, it is not quite proper garb for adventuring among rocks.

2. In the event that the cotton sundress is unavoidable, do not bring a pure white to the cave.

3. In the event that the cotton sundress is unavoidable, and you do—for some insane reason—bring a matching pursuit that you will not be using, choose to wear an underwear other than a ruffled grosgrain panties.

4. In the event that the cotton sundress, pursued and ruffled granny panties are unavoidable, ensure that there is no video camera in the vicinity.

5. In the event that the cotton sundress, pursued and ruffled granny panties are unavoidable, and a camera exists, make sure it is not walking at the moment when you choose an elevated cavern floor, with your skirt flying overhead and people watching from below.

6. In the event that the cotton sundress, pursued, ruffled granny panties and video camera are unavoidable, and that same camera decides to follow you all the way to your cave, make sure that your tour guide does not think he is Steven Spielberg yelling "Take 27" after every fall.

7. In the event that the cotton sundress, pursued and ruffled granny panties are unavoidable, and a video camera exists, and that same camera is rolling when you fall on your ass, and that the tour guide does think he is Steven Spielberg, do not stand up, smile and do everything all over again.

Getting to the Sohoton Cave means an hour-long ride on a bamboo boat along the Sunoy River. The boat is motorized, explained by an old timer sitting at the very tip of the boat, his outboard face a network of wrinkles. We pass by mushroom rocks, rolling hills covered with dense bamboo groves so thick that we, looking as if they were looking at their toes. Bwahaaa.

The bones of dead men guard the entrance of the cave. Long ago, Filipino rebels waited at the top of a cliff to ambush unsuspecting Spaniards. They were buried in the mouth of Sohoton Cave. When the locals realized this, they began burying their dead side by side with the white men. The Spaniards have long since been exhumed, but there is no telling how many of our men are left sleeping at the cave's mouth.

Keeping your footing on damp ground—which vaguely resembles the moon's surface but smells of bespoken on a different course—is a challenge in itself. There is a scurry at the opening, and I see him through a gap in the cavern wall. He stands half-hidden by the gloom, one on his disabled shoulder, face lined in white limits and cap pulled over his face. When the beam from my flashlight swings over him, he disappears and becomes just another lump bulging from a wall of rocks.

I walk through caverns after caverns. I'm told that water from the moon above the caves has seeped into the rock, forming calcite and limestone that accumulate for thousands of years until they become stalactites and stalagmites. I understand what it means in principle, but pictures don't do it justice. I have never been a fan of the pictures of the caves have always been here, and that the projections are pictures frozen in perpetual sleep, waiting to be blessed awake by somebody with a pure heart. Or something like that. Before I could start kissing any rocks—I can just imagine cutting a half-dozen of my tongues open to see pictures of Jesus and screaming them to my mother—my guide asks if I want to view yet another internal organ.

He flashlights towards my the walls. I look up, and there it is, the great organ itself, extending out of the ceiling, quite excited to see us, to all intents and purposes anatomically correct. The lungs of muscular administration are, I'm sure, a little small to the walls.

The rock extrapolate marches on from one end of the cave to the other. There is an eight, two stories high, which will do any blue-blooded Sinoman proud. Dumbo-like his ossification a resting dog, a bowling lost and a napping cat. It's like a walking tour of a strange new city. "There, the first letter," I point to him. "We have a name for every shape in the sky, you see. The Three Kings! The Angels! Mount Pinatubo! Our guide, Francisco Gombio—he claims to be related to Pilar Gombio—explains the naming of the rocks. He says that whenever a new group wanders through the cave, it gives new names to the formations. What if the Statue of Liberty is one in the cave of bats up the road?

There's one cavern that my all-male cave probes—one whose name, there is no doubt, fits. "We call this the maraca," my intrepid guide says, then points his flashlight up to the low ceiling.

And there, in all their womanly glory, dark nipples point-ing downwards, are as if pulled by gravity, six dozens of breasts—in every variety—pointy, bi-cone and breasty, full breasts that drip low water; and long, elongated breasts that seem too tired to take notice. They run the gamut of cup A to triple-F, extended in a six-foot square space.

I remember when I was 12 and listening in an older woman-group discussion about breasts, and how one size, myself counting, fourteen effort to keep my eyes on her face. She was wearing a bright, low-regime and blouse with a ruffled, plunging neckline—no, not plunging, plummeting—that displayed to all and sundry an incredibly healthy bosom. I remember being momentarily afraid—probably the same way astronauts feel when they're being against the rim of a black hole. Who knows what might fall in?

Chalk it up to two sets.

Orson Welles claims that man's departure from the caves can be attributed to the descent of Woman. "If there hadn't been women, we could still be squatting in a cave eating raw meat. Woman we made civilization in order to impress our girlfriends."

I beg to differ. Personally, I believe it was Woman who went out of the cave with a club and dragged to carve out civilization...anything to get away from the boyfriend compelling her breasts to the interior decoration.

Wandering around a cave has a distinct side effect. I like to think of myself as relatively self-assured individual—mainstream rational, more often reckless, usually my own No. 1 fan. But confronted with a millennia of history, standing caverns and bustling pillars, I suddenly feel very insignificant.

Supremely so amid the dead area.

* * *

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A food stand on the plaza

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

IT HAS NOW BE CONSIDERED WATER UNDER the bridge, but a recent dispute between contending factions in the Order of the Holy Sepulchre of the Heritage Conservation Society) and Cavite, which rises as well as to impose on parent, Jubilee Foods Corp., is a good example of citizens as their home of vigilance, as well as of corporate responsibility to the public at large.

The dispute began with alleged moves by a road to Nine Tee Catering, president of Jubilee Foods, by John Silva, a consultant with the National Museum and former trustee of the Heritage Conservation Society, to establish a food stand on the Corregidor very loud stand of Corregidor Plaza on the town plaza of Pila. The plaza was declared a National Historical Landmark by the National Historical Institute in 2000 because, said Silva, "it is one of the few remaining examples of Spanish-era colonial town plaza, surrounded by some very fine examples of Spanish and American period houses."

Because of its landmark status, the Pila town plaza is protected by law from "unauthorized construction, alteration, destruction and other activities," as Silva noted. "The Gerweinich food stand is within the townspeople who fought for and secured the Landmark status, in addition, the food stand sits on the Rizal monument, which is also protected under the law," he added, "It is one of the few remaining examples of Spanish-era colonial town plaza, surrounded by some very fine examples of Spanish and American period houses."

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TALK of the TOWN

Edna Juan N. Sarmiento Jr.

Challenge to traditional medicine

TRADITIONAL HEALING PRACTICES ARE GAINING POPULARITY WORLDwide because Western medicine cannot meet current medical needs. Also called "complementary" or "alternative" medicine in industrialized countries, traditional medicine includes acupuncture, herbal preparations, aromatherapy, Ayurveda, chiropractic and homeopathic medicine.

The practitioners of traditional medicine in the Philippines are the albularyos and manghilots, who provide an important function in areas where public and private health services are either non-existent or beyond the reach of the people.

Albularyos use indigenous herbs like sambong for kidney and gall stones, and lagundi for colds, coughs and asthma. The Department of Health itself is promoting around 30 medicinal herbs for public use.

The global market for herbal medicines is estimated at more $60 billion annually and is growing steadily.

With the growing popularity of traditional medicines come increasing efforts to regulate them.

The number of countries regulating the sale of traditional remedies rose from 14 in 1988 to 53 in 2003, according to the World Health Organization. Some 40 more countries are seeking to regulate the sale of traditional medicines.

In the Philippines, the country's medical association has expressed concern over the proliferation of food supplements, herbal preparations and alternative health care practices. The association is calling for an end to the advertisement of supplements and preparations whose therapeutic effects have not been established. Other groups do not share the association's position.

Doctors threatened by alternative medicine

By Josef de Ubaldo, Doc.

TRADITIONAL MEDICINE refers to health practices, approaches, knowledge and beliefs incorporating plant, animal, and mineral based medicines, spiritual therapies, manual techniques and exercises applied singularly or in combination to treat, diagnose and prevent illnesses, or maintain well-being.

Traditional in Africa, Asia and Latin America are traditional medicine (TM) to help meet some of their primary health care needs. In Africa, up to 80 percent of the population uses TM for primary healthcare. In industrialized countries, adaptations of TM are termed "complementary" or "alternative" medicine (CAM).

TM has maintained its popularity in the developing world and its use is rapidly spreading to industrialized countries.

• In China, traditional herbal preparations account for 30 to 50 percent of the total medicinal consumption.

• In Ghana, Mali, Nigeria and Lesotho, the first line of treatment for 60 percent of children with high fever resulting from malaria is the use of herbal medicines at home.

• The World Health Organization also estimates that in several African countries, traditional birth attendants assist in the majority of births.

• In Europe, the U.S.A. and Australia, 70 percent of people living with HIV/AIDS use TM/CAM.

• A survey pertains of the population in Canada has used complementary medicine at least once.

• In Germany, 90 percent of the population has used a natural remedy at least once in their lives. Between 1993 and 2000, the number of doctors who underwent special training in natural remedy therapy alone almost doubled to 13,000.

• In the United States, 158 million of the adult population are using complementary medicines according to the US Commission for Alternative and Complementary Medicines, $1.7 billion was spent on medicinal plants in 1997.

• In the United Kingdom, annual reproduction on alternative medicines is placed at $230 million.

• The global market for herbal medicines currently stands at more than $60 billion annually and is growing steadily.

The Philippine, globally known as land of the healers, abounds in traditional medicines handed down through oral tradition and preserved in folk-related value.

Because of unchecked 13,000 medicinal plants and herbs

not to mention the world famous seed for cancer was found in the back of toilet in Mt. Pulag in the northern part of the Philippines.

Age-old practices in Baguio City and Ifugao in cancer treat in Oriental Mindoro have been found to contain antioxidants. Antioxidant can combat free radicals and escape that damages the human body. We can no more live comfortable and heal from gas emissions as well as saliva and metals such as mercury and so never that can be found in bodies of water.

Even before the coming of the Spaniards in 1521, people living in what is now called the Philippines were practicing traditional medicines of healing such as cauterization or nature cure, bonesetting (bone) or chiropractic methods, and herbology.

Albularyo

The Filipino albularyo, noted to be a practitioner of holistic health and wellness, employs traditional folk medicine, body manipulation and aromatherapy.

He manages watercolors with various means to restore the body of a patient afflicted with high fever. Another natural method is making both hot of the patient afflicted with colds on a bidet of lukewarm water with sea salt.

Traditional chiropractic is applied by bonesetters (to manipulate) bones in the arms, feet and spinal cord of a patient.

Herbology uses indigenous herbs. The medicinal herb sambong is boiled and drunk as disinfectant and gall stones. Lagundi for colds, coughs, asthma and chronic sinusitis. Ampalaya (momordica) or bitter gourd is well known for its multifaceted medicinal property. Fruits is not only used as spice for cooking but also can lower high cholesterol level.

The Department of Health is promoting around 30 medicinal herbs for public use.

Chinese medicine

The centuries-old traditional Chinese medicine must have carried a huge influence on TM practitioners. They believe that natural points in acupressure and plant acupuncture to achieving equilibrium between the yin and yang. The chi energy is crucial in every human in promoting holistic health.

In remote areas of the country where healthcare delivery system is generally non-existent, the people's faith and dependence (TM/CAM) medicine area) are well placed. They use herbs, animal medicinal plants and herbs together with massage, spiritual healing and prayers. Even serious diseases such as cancer.

In this light, the Department of Tourism is pushing for health tourism, which calls for the integration of traditional healing techniques, and promotion of health farms, resorts and wellness clinics.

The Philippines has a competitive edge in health destinations because of the presence of many spiritual healing resources (one of them is Mt. Banahaw) and natural plants such as hot springs and other healing natural that have curative and rejuvenating effects on people.

Thus the initiative mineral salt in another herb made abound in the mosquito of Manila, Iloilo, Cebu, and Davao and are continuing to increase tourism.

Deconfusion is the using the oil (sweat) wellness. This is done through using non-detailing machine, ethnology movement, diet and fasting, colonics, hydrotherapy, coffee enema and massages.

Republic Act no. 8423, the Traditional and Alternative Medicine Act, was passed by Congress and signed into law in 1997 by then President Fidel V. Ramos.

Attempts at regulation

The Philippine Medical Association is behind the campaign for reforms, who promote complementary and alternative medicine) by the proliferation of herbal medicines.

There is a call for a moratorium on the proliferation of imported herbal preparations in the country. The Bureau of Food and Drugs (BFAD) and Bureau of Customs have to need a task force to protect the health and welfare of Filipinos.

Existing herbal medicines in the Philippines must undergo rigorous test and licensing. However, a different kind of system and standards for testing safety and efficacy must be adopted because the active ingredient in herbal medicines is never identified but the synergistic effects of all the active ingredients are established.

Complementary

Thus, the pharmaceutical standards for testing and clinical trials cannot be applied. A German standard of pharmacopoeia can then be applied.

Complementary and alternative medicine, as defined by the US National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine (NCCAM), is a group of diverse medical and health care systems, practices, and products that are not currently considered part of conventional medicine.

Integrative medicine, as defined by NCCAM, combines mainstream medical and CAM therapies for which there is some high-quality scientific evidence of safety and effectiveness. They are described as follows:

1. Alternative medical systems

Alternative medical systems are built upon complete systems of theory and practice. Often, these systems have evolved apart from and before the dominant biomedical model (allopathic medicine) current this have existed and experienced in the United States.

2. Mind-body interventions

Mind-body medicine uses a variety of techniques designed to enhance the mind's capacity to affect bodily functions.

3. Biologically based therapies

Biologically based therapies in CAM use substances found in nature, such as herbs, foods, and vitamins.

4. Manipulative and body-based methods

Manipulative and body-based methods in CAM are based on manipulation and/or movement of one or more parts of the body.

5. Energy therapies

Energy therapies are focused, at times putative, fields that purportedly surround and penetrate the human body. The existence of such fields has not yet been scientifically proven. Some forms of energy therapy manipulate fields by applying pressure and/or manipulating the body by placing the hands in, or through, these fields.

• Bioelectromagnetic-based therapies involve the unconventional use of bioelectromagnetic fields, such as pulsed fields, magnetic fields, or alternating current or direct current fields.

Homeopathy

The DOH of alternative medicine in Washington has adopted homeopathy and acupuncture as forms of complementary healing practices in the state. The national school of medicine has been using acupuncture as a form of analgesia.

The NCCAM, the US federal government's lead agency for scientific research on CAM, is dedicated to exploring complementary and alternative healing practices in the context of rigorous sensory, training, CAM researchers, and dissemination information to the public and professionals. These include:

• Acupuncture • Dietary supplements

• Aromatherapy • Electromagnetic fields

• Ayurveda • Homeopathic medicine

• Chiropractic

Safety issues

Scientific evidence from random clinical trials is strong for some areas of acupuncture, some herbal medicines and for some of the manual therapies. Further research is needed to assess safety and efficacy of several other practices and natural products.

Unregulated or inappropriate use of traditional medicines and practices can have negative or dangerous effects.

For instance, the herb "ma huang" (ephedra) is traditionally used in China as cross respiratory complaints. As the natural source, the herb was marketed as a dietary aid, relaxer were damage led to at least a dozen deaths, heart attacks and strokes.

In Bulgarian, at least 70 people suspected renal consultants in died with the unidentified illnesses of the kidney after taking an herbal preparation made from the herbaceous species of plant as diuretic weight reducer.

Biodiversity

In addition to patient safety uses, there is the risk that a growing herbal market and its great commercial benefit might pose a threat to biodiversity through the over harvesting of raw materials for herbal medicine and other products. Certain herbs are products. These practices, if not controlled, may lead to the extinction of endangered species and the disruption of natural habitats and resources.

Another current issue is the protections provided under international agreements for patents and most national intellectual property laws. It is inadequate to protect traditional knowledge and biodiversity.

Tried and tested methods

• Twenty-five percent of modern medicines are made from plants first used as herbs.

• Acupuncture has been proven effective in relieving postoperative pain, nausea during pregnancy, vomiting and nausea associated with chemotherapy and dental pain with extremely low side effects. It can also stimulate natural pain-killers in the brain and nervous system.

• Yoga can reduce asthma attacks while tai chi techniques can help the elderly reduce their fear of falling.

• Tai can also have an impact on infectious diseases. For example, the Chinese herbal remedy artemisia annua, used in China for almost 2,000 years, has been found to be effective against cerebral malaria and could create a breakthrough in preventing almost one million deaths annually, most of them children, from severe malaria.

• In South Africa, the Medical Research Council is conducting studies on the efficacy of the plant sutherlandia microphylla in treating AIDS patients. Traditionally used as a tonic, this plant may increase energy, appetite and body mass in people living with HIV.

WHO promotes TM

The World Health Organization has launched its first comprehensive traditional medicine strategy in 2002 to assist countries in:

• Developing national policies on the evaluation and regulation of TM/CAM practices;

• Providing a strategic evidence base on the safety, efficacy and quality of the TM/CAM products and practices;

• Ensuring the availability and affordability of TM/CAM including essential herbal medicines;

• Promoting therapeutically safe and effective TM/CAM by providers and consumers;

• Documenting traditional medicines and remedies.

• Following the resolution of the Philippine Federation of Natural Health and Environment Friendly Organizations, [

'Stop ads of nonscientifically proven products'

By Modesto O. Llamas, MD

I AM HEAVILY CONCERNED with the proliferation of food supplements, herbal preparations and alternative healthcare modalities being marketed and promoted in media for all or specific types of illness or disease for incredible reasons.

Unethical supporting such claims

The public should know that only legends, testimony, magazine articles and books are approved by the Department of Health or of therapeutic value other supporting scientific studies have been conducted. Moreover, these herbal preparations should be taken only upon prescription or consultation with a physician to avoid drug interactions, overdosage, and duration of intake.

The DOH has created the Institute of Health Medicine (IHM) to conduct reviews, studies and researches, with the assistance of other reputable organizations on the following perspectives or dimensions healthcare modalities:

Immunization, herbal medicine, IV infused glutathione therapy for cancer, chelation therapy, microchemotherapy, prayer healing, and doctor medicine (apparel).

Nutritional medicine, hypothalamic therapy, therapeutic medicine, optometrapy, acupuncture therapy, acupressure, light and color therapy and meditation.

These should not be advertised, used or applied unless scientifically validated by the IHM.

The practice of radiology and chemotherapy has no scientific basis and should not be advertised. When used for the treatment of diseases, there are possible carcinogenic effects that may be the cause of the appalling disease and end in progression of the disease.

Food supplements and herbal preparations should therefore not be directly or indirectly marketed or promoted as having therapeutic effects, treating clinical situations or medical or nutritional or palliative therapies, labels, and packaging materials.

In safeguard for health of the people, I urge all media organizations to stop the advertising or promotion of unscientifically proven products being marketed as having therapeutic effects.

(Llamas is the immediate past president of the Philippine Medical Association.)

INQUIRER Mindanao

John Jan Bandayrel
Davao Cityl Nina R. Alvarado

Ozamiz resurrects historic fortress

By Rony Macahong
Contributor

TO MAKE THE CELEBRATION OF the 250th year of Catholicism in Ozamiz City in Misamis Occidental more memorable, local officials have completed, in time for the event, the restoration of the historic Fuerte de la Concepcion del Triunfo and the beautification of the Birhen sa Cotta Shrine.

"Our legacy to Ozamizanons and a dream come true for the devotees and pilgrims in northwestern Mindanao and elsewhere," Mayor Reynaldo Parojinog called the projects. "When the past administrations failed to do, we succeeded in doing it now for the glory of the Birhen."

Yesterday, as part of the month-long celebration that still culminate on July 23, the fortress' wooden doors were unveiled as the city also observes its 106th charter anniversary.

Declared a national historical landmark in 2002 by the National Historical Institute, the fortress—plainly called the "Misamis Cotta"—was restored along with the shrine in line with the city government's program of preserving the place as a cultural heritage site, pilgrimage destination and tourist spot.

It is notable because of historical dug by both Japanese soldiers and Filipino guerrillas during its siege in 1942 and an earthquake that struck the Zamboanga Peninsula in 1955.

The city has so far spent P11.7 million in restoring the fortress and in expanding and beautifying the Misamis Birhen del Triunfo de la Cruz, or simply the Birhen sa Cotta Shrine to devotees and pilgrims.

BUILT next to the Birhen sa San Ignacio is a watchtower that, when lighted, guides mariners and fishermen entering the Panguil Bay at night. It has a 24-step stairway.

DOT pledge

Of the amount, P1.7 million came from the Department of Tourism, which was part of the P5 million committed by then Secretary Richard Gordon to the projects and released last year by Roberto Ongpauco, the tourism chief who took over the DOT later that year. He would follow up with incumbent Tourism Secretary Joseph Durano the remaining P1.1 million to be used in constructing school coast next to the fortress and the shrine and in concreting and landscaping the grounds.

The houses of some 200 squatter families around the fortress and the shrine were demolished after they refused to heed Parojinog's deadline to relocate on or before April 30.

The Misamis Cotta had been used as headquarters of a unit of the defunct Philippine Commonwealth Army the Americans colonial regime and after it was liberated from the Japanese in 1945, the Philippine Constabulary, the forerunner of the Philippine National Police that succeeded it, was transferred to an idle public market inside the property and has nominal complex at the start of the restoration work last year.

Closed to the public since demolishing it and standing imposingly some 50 meters from the port, the Misamis Cotta now is passengers disembarking from barges and interisland ships. It houses a newly constructed museum and an elegant rest room. Its mineral has been rehabilitated.

"Those who have gone to our city in the past eight say the [106th anniversary] celebration is impossible with the presence of the dramatic revised fortress area. Today, we are proud to express the thanksgiving did it, again to the glory of the Birhen sa Cotta," Parojinog said in a press release.

Sealed and starved

The Misamis Cotta was among the fortresses built by the Spaniards in Mindanao in the 16th century. Other structures are found in the banks of the river across the Panguil Bay in Jangan, Inclored, Lanao del Norte, in still overlooking the sea in Dapitan City, the San Francisco Fortress in Siquijor City, Fort San Jose in Cagayan de Oro City and Pilar in Zamboanga City.

In 1756, the Misamis Cotta was built by the native inhabitants of Iyasin princes Francisco Jose Dacsa and Hipolitacruz Pivos, primarily to provide shelter for Spanish battle ships anchored in the bay, historical accounts showed.

It was also used as a base to launch attacks against Muslim raiders and pirates who plundered the town and marched natives to be sold as slaves to rich and royal Muslim families in Cotabato, Zamboanga, Sulu and even in Java, Borneo, Malaysia and Indonesia.

The fortress survived the test of time although it, in the line of Archbishop of Fort William Michelmas puts, "bowed to the weight of centuries."

"Sealed and starved," local journalist Gerson Dumolias wrote in his book, "Island in Captivity and Some Historical Bits of Misamis Occidental," using cannon fires from the Japanese, rifle fires from the guerrillas, machine gun and bombs from US bombers planes in World War II, the 1955 earthquake and...an axis the restoration of devotees and pilgrims...indifference until 2005, when restoration work began.

The corner of the western bastion of the 5.8-meter-hot has cracked by about six inches. Its walls have cracked by 50 centimeters.

Wash foundation

Dumolias, who has a doctorate in philosophy, claimed that aside from the heavenly 7 earthquake that hit Ozamiz in April 1955, the bastion dug by the Japanese soldiers when they took cover during US aerial bombardments and the clippings made by the Filipino guerrillas during World War II might have weakened the facility's foundation.

THE COTTA Shrine after the restoration.

The Misamis Cotta has four bastions:

- Baluarte de San Ignacio in the southeast facing the Panguil Bay and named after Jesuit Order founder St. Ignatius.
- Baluarte de San Juan in the northeast, also facing the sea, named after the future father of Jesus.
- Baluarte de San Miguelo in the northwest facing the town and named after King Ferdinand of Castille.
- Baluarte de Santiago in the southwest, also facing the town, named after the apostle Saint James.

The interior yard measures 60.45 x 56.9 meters. The upper hall wall is 60 cm thick, making it impenetrable to bullets fired from 20th-century weapons. The lower hall wall is 1.4 meters thick, protecting occupants even from heavy artillery fire.

A 9-kilometer and 17-m long access ramp from the base to the Baluarte de San Ignacio outside encirclement of cannons and soldiers to the top easier and faster. From one bastion to another are passageways 60 cm wide, each built with cannon and rifle emplacements.

Watchtower

Built next to the Baluarte de San Ignacio is a watchtower that guided mariners and vessels entering the bay at night when illuminated. It has a 24-step stairway.

Nov. 16, Emilio Pilchay of the Philippine Independent Church wrote in the local weekly Panguil Bay Weekly that the Spanish authorities and Governor, led by a Father Duran, resigned through fears and had the coins built by the natives through blood lahot and cruelty.

Those who could not contribute building materials like hauling out-rigged (pandanus) were made to lie on the ground and given 25 lashes, Pilchay said. Those charged with more serious offenses were tied to five trunks with arm or had their feet submerged to boiling water inside the "Balay nga Tinu" (Stone House) of the Indigenous that still stands on Lydonia Street.

"Bodoya ba wat," reads a notice hung on the wall of the house today. It is there where replicas of the Juan Kisal's clothes were displayed for days during tour of the national hero's death anniversary a few years back.

When the Japanese forces entered Ozamiz of, on bombing the place on Dec. 27, 1941 and killing any person on sight with bullets and bayonets, they converted the fortress into a garrison and occupied the houses of prominent families, including that of the Dimoldas, according to PMPA account.

The entire town fell on June 30, 1941, after the guerrilla movement suffered heavy casualties, including the capture and killing of three leaders—Capt. Amando Diamal, Lt. Dilat Macaway and 2nd Lt. Familiar Bendez. Amerikes commissioned by the occupation forces battered the growth of the resistance movement that was organized by Maj. Jose Morgan of the US Armed Forces in the Far East (USAFE) on Sept. 16, 1941.

The province, then known as Regiondo Distrito de Misamis, included the present-day Zamboanga del Norte, Misamis Occidental, Misamis Oriental, Lanao del Norte, Camiguin, Bukidnon and parts of Cotabato and Maguindanao.

The district was named Misamis after its capital town (now Ozamiz City) located at the mouth of the Panguil Bay.

Liberation days

The liberation of Misamis started after Maj. Maurelo Fortiffo replaced Major Enrique as commander of Sec. Fortiffo's 104th Regiment, who was seriously wounded in an encounter with the Japanese on Aug. 20, 1944, and hospitalized in Misamis, Iloro Guinea.

Among the officers and soldiers who figured in the campaign were Captains Sagimundo Dalipagua and Sotero Obsioa, First Lieutenants Antero Buenconsejo and Benjamin Cadiz, and 2nd Lt. Ingracio Cuaya. Their unit was reinforced by the 110th Regiment under Col. Hipolito Carreon.

Other officers who joined the offensives were Captains Arnold Arnold, Elmer Abellanosa and Francisco Chacli Bacud of the reserved 1st Battalion of the 106th Regiment; 1. First Lieutenants Ernesto de Baron, Demetrio Ely, Eugenio Mer, Jesus de Leon, Ramon Cabana and Zeilo Bauan; 2nd Lt. Sulbrado Amoroza, 3rd Lt. Pensenario Sarapio and Lieutenant Noli Pandong and Hitosis.

The guerrillas surrounded the fortress for more than two weeks starting at dawn of Nov. 22, 1944. Lieutenant Pandong, who was awaiting a woman bearing a letter requesting the Japanese to surrender, was hit in the left thigh by a sniper before reaching the place. Sgt. Francisco Hitosis Ello and Corporals Hobo Pangantihon and Feliciano Bacay were killed by snipers while returning to their benches after pulling bamboo ladders on the walls of the fortress.

The ladders were replaced by volunteer guards of the Iloilo Battalion, as named for running down coconut trees to block the Japanese and carrying messages built for the guerrillas using them before.

Members of the Women Auxiliary Service (WAS), founded by local heroine Josefa Capistrano to procure food, clothing and other vital supplies for the guerrillas and tend to the sick and wounded, also came to treat the wounded and cook food for the fighters.

Bukugan Hill

The Misamis Cotta was finally recaptured on Dec. 10, 1945, a day after two US planes strafed it with machine guns fire and dropped incendiary bombs, killing many Japanese soldiers and their civilian captives.

Next in the restoration list of Mayor Parojinog is the historic Bukugan Hill overlooking Panguil Bay in the south, where Maj. Lucas Naranjo, then "Colonel" in local accounts as the bravest guerrilla leader in Misamis, and his men engaged the Japanese in a fierce battle during the Liberation.

It was in Bukugan that the Spaniards in Misamis, as legend has it, vanish "into" their room. Before they open the door bell to see inconspicuous top of the hill. Behind "signal" would reach Dapitan, Bohoklon, Cotabato and other parts of Mindanao.

Local historians Fr Miguel Bernad and Dr Ramon Zamoras revealed in their books that the Spaniards would hear the huge bell to alert encomiendas occupying other parts of the island of enemy intrusions. Those who received the message 'would' why it is remember to neighboring places, like Cotabato and Zamboanga.

THE AUTHOR is editor in chief of the local weekly The Panguil Bay Bitterns. He is currently involved in a project to come up with a written history of Misamis City.

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4 more evacuees die in Maguindanao

COTABATO CITY—FOUR MORE PERSONS, among them a 10-month-old baby girl, have died in evacuation centers in Maguindanao because of illnesses, bringing the death toll on civilians caught in the crossfire of fighting between militiamen and guerrillas to seven.

Dr. Tahir Sulaik, Maguindanao health chief, said most of the latest victims suffered from severe cough and chest ailments.

Residents of at least four towns in Maguindanao were moved to evacuation centers when fighting broke out between the militiamen and guerrillas on June 28.

Earlier, three evacuees, including a 10-month-old baby boy, died of severe anemia in Shariff Aguak town.

Sulaik said the latest victims did not die under the care of government health workers but from MILF medics, who were not as experienced in treating illnesses.

He said health authorities have suspected the victims died of "dietetic overloading" or infestation of too much fluids.

"The victims were brought to unlicensed rebel medics by their relatives," Sulaik said.

Sulaik said they were told that the relatives of the four victims have refused to seek help from government health workers for still unknown reasons.

"There are many cases of such incidents. The problems here is that some residents would seek the help of rebel medics, who they call doctors," he said.

Sulaik said they were seeking the help of authorities and rebel chiefs in put a stop to the practice of rebel medics because this would endanger the lives of the patients.

"They have no proper training," he said.

As days developed, Sulaik said the number of people being given medical assistance by the government has declined following the return of majority of evacuees to their homes.

About 30,000 people were displaced because of the skirmishes that have affected at least five towns, including the capital town of Shariff Aguak.

The clashes started when militiamen controlled by Gov. Andal Ampatuan stormed a rebel camp in Shariff Aguak following the June 25 roadside bomb attack that killed seven people and injured 19 others.

Ambuklao said Ampatuan was the target of the attack.

The governor's son had barely passed what the explosion took place near the public market. He was unscathed but four people in a car trailing Ampatuan's vehicle were killed.

It was not clear how many combatants died because of the clashes because of conflicting claims. Jeoffrey Maitem, PDI Mindanao Bureau

A MARINE in full combat gear disembarks from a Navy ship in Burgos, Tawi-Tawi, some 400 troops from the Philippine Marine Battalion Landing Team 3 arrived to replace another unit. —AFP

Raps filed vs squatting syndicate

A GOVERNMENT TEAM INVESTIGATING an eyesillazon pressing on private lot owners gained ground when it helped three people file criminal charges against members of a squatting syndicate operating in areas near Metro Manila.

Lawyers Sebastian, Armando Barbosa and Rolando Serrano, owners of private lots in Grand View Park Subdivision in San Mateo, Rizal, filed the cases before Chief State Prosecutor Aurelio Trampe of the Department of Justice.

In a statement, Amado Bagatsing, vice chair of the Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council and head of the National Unit Against Professional Squatters and Squatting Syndicates, said the three lot owners charged spouses Bernard and Rachel Mabuggay with estafa and illegal occupation of the lots on the days that the complainants owned.

The Mabuggays are claiming the lots as theirs and supposedly covered by a land title.

Bagatsing said he helped the three lot owners use the couple with the help of Percival Chavez, chair of the Presidential Commission for the Urban Poor, and Chief Supt. Arturo Ereñeta.

The Mabuggays were accused of usurpation of real property rights, grave coercion, malicious mischief and violation of the building code.

Vegetable prices soar as 'Florita' destroys roads

By Dolores Cariño
PhilNet News Luzon Bureau

LA TRINIDAD, BENGUET—THE recent rains that have made travel out of Kennon Highway impossible due to typhoon "Florita" have driven vegetable prices at the vegetable trading post here sour high.

Traders are now scrambling for scarce supply as vegetable harvests from the province's farms have not arrived as expected the past few days.

The 84-km Halsema Highway is the province's main road network that connects the vegetable-producing towns of Tabling Ibek, Bogtan, Atok, Kibungan and Kibungan.

"The high demand from truckers affected the prices of the limited supply of vegetables," said Dominador Dungis, chief market inspector of the trading post.

Cabbage, which is normally sold at P8 to P10 a kilogram, sells for P20 to P30 a kg, while patsoy was sell from P12 to P14-P16 a kg, he said.

Even the price of the common chayote, Dungis said, went up to P20 to P25 a kg, up from P5 to P8 a kg.

Carrots took the highest increase from P15 to P40 a kg, he said.

Dungis said 750,000 to 1.5 million kg of assorted vegetables pass through the trading post daily before they are packed and shipped to Metro Manila and other parts of Luzon.

The prices were expected to increase further as the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) announced that the Halsema Highway suffered a major blow from typhoon Florita.

Alexander Castañeda, Benguet DPWH engineer, said the highway suffered major damage along three areas. A 30-meter road cut was recorded in Atok, Pekdeg in Barangay Ampucao-Ampucao to Bagabag while slides and mudflow hit the road along Barangays Calaspan and Cattubig in Sick town.

"I hope we can restore a way for vehicles within the next three to four days," he said.

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Court told cult leader Ecleo healthy for jail

FLOODED WAKE
A boy sits in an elevated chair beside the coffin of a dead relative July 14 in the fishing town of Bagacay, Bohol as flood water submerged the area. Tropical storm "Florita" visited the country causing floods in a large area and leaving 14 people dead and 7 missing in the north.

By Jolene R. Balumbos and Ruowen Magallanes
PDI Visayas Bureau

CEBU CITY—A CARDIOLOGIST has testified in court that contrary to what cult leader Rolan Ecleo Jr. is trying to go back to jail, citing his medical findings that the supreme master of the Philippine Benevolent Missionaries Association (PBMA) has no significant coronary heart disease.

The private prosecutors presented Jael Thaniela, Dr. Genaveva Madiga, an internist specializing in cardiology from the Perpetual Succour Hospital, to testify on his findings after being asked by Integrated Trial Court Judge Estrella Elamparo to conduct medical examinations on Ecleo.

Ecleo, who is facing a parricide case after being accused of killing his wife Alona Barcelo-Ecleo in January 2002, has been allowed to post bail but post after suspension of their petition. His doctors said he was a "walking time bomb."

Lawyer Fitz Quiñanola, one of the private prosecutors, has asked Judge Leong to order another medical examination of Ecleo to determine the cult leader's actual physical condition while also asking the court to revoke his bail bond.

Quiñanola earlier said that Ecleo is healthy and physically fit, based on their observation at the accused during hearings.

Ecleo failed to attend the hearing yesterday after his counsels manifested that their client could not come because of the typhoon in Luzon. Ecleo, his lawyers claimed, is currently residing in Manila while undergoing his regular medical checkup at the Makati Medical Center.

Elamparo, in his short resolution on Thursday, said Ecleo did not suffer from any significant coronary disease and that his vital signs appeared normal while being subjected to medical tests on June 22.

Ecleo, he said, went through a contrast-enhanced 128-1 echocardiogram and a 30-minute treadmill stress test.

Black bug infestation now eating up rice plants in 4 provinces

PILI, CAMARINES SUR—Spreading here previously in the mainland, the black bug infestation has spread to four Bicol provinces—covering 20 towns and a total of 98 villages, according to a report of the Regional Crop Protection Center (RCPC) of the Department of Agriculture.

The report showed a tremendous spread of the infestation that started in the coastal town of Siruma in Camarines Sur last year. At the end of May, nine of the 10 municipalities and a total of 74 villages had been confirmed black bug-infested.

For five months, the black bug infestation was confined only in Siruma until the RCPC confirmed its spread in Albay in April with infestation verified in two villages of Legazpi City and one village of Daraga-Daraga and one village in Manito.

In May, the black bug infestation further spread in Camarines Sur—in the four adjoining towns of Caramoan, San Jose, Sangay and Lagonoy in the Partido District of the province, facing the province of Catanduanes.

From Camarines Sur, the black bug infestation spread later that month to Catanduanes with outbreaks in two villages.

But RCPC said it still had to assess and verify whether or not the pest had already inflicted crop losses to the province.

Only the provinces of Camarines Sur and Masbate remained free from black bug infestation until now.

Balagtas Torres, DA regional executive director, said the black bug infestation does not pose significant harm to rice production of the region because, he said, it is only destructive to rice plants at the vegetative stage—one to two months old.

Torres said the black bug could drive farmers to rice plants that are in the flowering and fruiting stages.

He said the DA has not yet encouraged the use of chemicals against the black bug because, he said, predators of the pest will also die and chemicals could do more harm than good.

Torres said the RCPC had already developed the method for biological control of black bug using a preparation of botanicals called neem/tuba-tuba nut/sea, distillate and tells the bug as the bacteria are passed on from bug to bug.

He said the DA regional office cannot handle the information alone and called on the local government units to help in financing the war on the bugs.

In a statement issued to Tonee Evangeline C. Dela Trinidad, RCPC chief, reported that her office has already distributed manuals/fliers in seven towns affected by the black bug infestation in the province of Albay and Sorsogon.

A FARMER holds samples of black bugs.

Dela Trinidad said the RCPC had also conducted seminars on how to control the spread of black bugs in the towns of Baao and Balatan in Sorsogon.

She said these areas were also dispatched to monitor the rise or fall of the pest's population by light trapping, dusting and before a full season. Jean Lacandazo Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Technology park in Camarines Sur seen to be IT hub in Asia Pacific

A TECHNOLOGY PARK SITS ON A FIVE-hectare piece of property in the heart of Camarines Sur and the province's governor sees it as the next information and technology hub in the Asia Pacific.

The Camarines Sur Information Technology Park was built in 2005 and received a special economic zone status from the Philippine Special Economic Zone Authority (PEZA) in March of the same year.

It was the first LGU-run and operated IT park in the country to receive such a status.

According to materials provided by the office of Gov. Luigi Villafuerte, the IT park has an area of 5,000 square meters and is equipped with fiber optic technology and is ready to operate.

THE FIVE-HECTARE technology park in Camarines Sur's provincial capital compound. The province's governor, Luigi Villafuerte, sees a hub for information technology in the project, which was the first LGU-run project to get an economic zone status.

The park is also conducting a series of conferences with provincial officials led by Villafuerte and representatives of two Philippine telecommunications firms.

The two companies also observed the actual conduct of an English proficiency training program session and talked to the program's students and trainers.

"The results of our talks with the Dell executives whom we took on the tour were certainly positive and very encouraging. We also got a positive reception during our presidential tour in the United States," Villafuerte said in a statement.

The successful entrepreneur-turned-public official also pointed out that aside from the superior facilities of the IT park, its province enjoys several advantages that would enable them to compete on a global scale. Among these are Camarines Sur is considered as the educational center of Bicol, with top-notch educational institutions such as the Ateneo de Naga, Nueva Caceres and Sta. Isabella.

The province has competitive labor costs and is accessible by airlines with regular flights by Philippine Airlines and Air Philippines. It is also accessible by land with a network of well-maintained highways and roads from Metro Manila.

"There is no such potential for global competitiveness in the IT sector for the Philippines in general and Camarines Sur in particular. If Bangalore in India was able to transform itself into a major global IT hub, I don't see any reason why we cannot do the same for our province," said Villafuerte.

"We have established the necessary infrastructure and we have started ramping up the capability of our manpower pool. I believe it's just a matter of time before we become a major player."

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Italian artist's sculptures enrich Metro landscape

Monti's works found in Sto. Domingo Church, the Met and Don Bosco

By Mike L. Morales

HIS NAME MIGHT NOT BE FAMILIAR, BUT Francesco Riccardo Monti's scene-fixtures in modern Philippine art and the enrichment of the Metro Manila landscape should not be taken for granted.

Monti, an Italian sculptor, was responsible for the unique statues and relief panels that decorate the Metropolitan Theater in Manila—priceless sculptures that show people a glimpse of a revolutionary treat in the world of art.

But before he carved a niche for himself in the local art community, Monti first endured rejection in his motherland.

Coming from a family of artists in Italy who were known for their sculptures for funerary and architectural works, Monti studied at the Institute of Francesco De Geronimo Arts and Technology. He also went to the Academy of Fine Arts in Milan where he professed the classical style of sculpting for which he would later become known.

Art deco

Monti's works could be classified as art deco, a style that was considered a reaction to the World War I, when people were forced to live cautiously. The use of aluminum, stainless steel, lacquer and inlaid wood, among other materials, are some features of art deco as its extravagance and festive style lifted with despair of cinema theatrics and screen lovers.

As he completed his studies in 1908, Monti received commissions to do funerary statues, monuments and other projects in Cremona, his hometown, and nearby cities as well. One of his most famous works was the monument dedicated to the families of the victims of World War I in Cremona and Piacenza.

In 1924, in recognition of his achievements, the king of Italy, Victor Emmanuel III—upon the recommendation of Prime Minister Benito Mussolini—bestowed upon Monti the title "Knight of the Crown of Italy."

Monti continued to do commissions commemorating the victims of the first world war. In November 1928, his entry for the monument to be built in honor of 53 Asians (Japanese soldiers who died in Gemona, was adjudged the winner. But several days later, organizers, allegedly due to "political maneuvering," changed the result of the competition.

Turning point

Filled with anger and disappointment, Monti left Gemona the following month, looking a better place for his art, he went to different parts of Europe before going to the United States where he met Juan Arellano, the noted Filipino architect. Arellano was in New York, to study theater design under

ITALIAN, A18

MONTI (left) with sculptor Ting Ping Lay, one of his students at UST, during a class exhibition.

Tondo's little big man saves 4 siblings from burning home

By Margaux C. Ortiz

RECORD CUBE IS ALL SHAPES AND sizes. And this 10-year-old boy often described as "too small for his age," is no exception.

John Kennedy Olivan, a fourth grader midway at the Magsaysay Elementary School, was searching interchangeably for his older brother Gerardo, 11, last June 28 in their small house in Tondo, Manila.

It was only a few hours before their afternoon classes, and John Kennedy—fondly called "Moy Moy" by his family—had been tasked by his mother to look after his younger brothers and sisters, but taking a snooze fell instead.

Man of the house

"Moy Moy usually looks after the small children while his brother Gerardo takes charge of other chores like sweeping the floor and washing the dishes," his mother, Yolanda, explained to the reporter in Filipino.

Yolanda, who helps make [crepe wrappers for a living, had placed the two older boys in charge of the household since she had to leave early for work with her husband, John Kennedy Sr., a pedicab driver.

Around 10 that fateful morning of June 25, Moy Moy noticed black smoke coming out of his uncle's bedroom while they were watching their favorite cartoon show on television.

"We were shocked to see that the fire inside the room was growing big," the 10-year-old said in a soft, unwavering voice.

While his brother, who was suffering from the flu, immediately ran downstairs to call their mother, Moy Moy was thinking about his sleeping brothers and sisters.

Running to their bedroom, Moy Moy tossed aside Boru, 1, and admac Jolly in his arms and called on Angelito Ring 6, and Angelica, 5, to hold on to his T-shirt.

"I did not mind how heavy they were. At that time I was only concerned about getting them all out," the fourth grader said.

Heavy load

With his small frame and this arm carrying a toddler and a baby, Moy Moy struggled to get down the stairs with two young children in tow.

At one point, the small group tripped on one of the steps, resulting in a bunk fracture for Angelito.

But Moy Moy bravely shepherded his siblings out of their home, which was quickly swallowed by the flames along with 12 other houses in the neighborhood.

"I was so happy and relieved when I saw them out on the street," Yolanda recalled. However, the family's joy at seeing the survivors quickly vanished when they saw all their belongings go up in flames.

"Nothing was saved. We did not know what would happen to us then," Moy Moy said.

Bravery rewarded

But the boy's heroism did not go unnoticed. Manila Mayor Lito Atienza heard of Moy Moy's deed and quickly responded by giving the Olivans a 20-sq. m. apartment unit in Tondo.

Karen Davidiuk, a social worker in charge of children in need of postal protection in Manila, said the city government also gave the boy's mother enough capital to start a small sari-sari (variety) store.

John Kennedy Sr., who used to earn P100 to P200 a day as a pedicab driver, was given a job at City Hall.

"Moy Moy is a very brave boy. Even if he is small for his age, he did not hesitate in saving his brothers and sisters, never left anything behind," Gerardo said.

The social worker explained that children of the same age usually run away when faced with similar situations.

Unusual behavior

"It was unusual for him to possess such courage and presence of mind at such a young age," Davidiuk said.

But the young boy confessed that he was no stranger to bravery. In school, he has stopped his bigger classmates from bullying smaller students.

"They bully me in my room if I'm this thin," Moy Moy said, laughing. "Maybe they are not used to being scolded by a smaller kid."

Yolanda also said it was in her young son's nature to help other people. The 11-year-old would gallantly offer to take over his older brother's chores and take care of the younger children without any complaint.

"He would also help his classmates who have a hard time doing their homework without asking for anything in return," Yolanda said of her second son.

Mrs. Moy, however, shook his head shyly when asked if he was proud of what he did.

"I just did what I had to do," the young boy said, in a tone that sounded more mature than his years. "I'm sure anyone in my place would have done exactly the same thing for people they love."

HOY HOY and his family (top) in their new house. A gift from Manila Mayor Lito Atienza who learned about the boy's heroic deed. Atienza also gave Moy Moy's mother, Yolanda, enough capital to open a small variety store (right).

Italian artist's sculptures enrich Metro landscape

From page A-13

Thomas Lamb, a famous theater and cinema architect whose works included the Zaguirl Theater and Gladstone Square Gardens.

Arellano invited Monti to come to the Philippines where the two began a fruitful collaboration. Over the next few years, Arellano would design several monument for which Monti would provide the sculptures.

Monti took a risk in moving to a country where he was a virtual unknown. Still, he was determined to make a name for himself so he could set roots here. In April 1938, he finally relocated to Cebu to sell his possessions. He and his wife Adriana, their two younger daughters Liliana and Sandra then left for Manila, leaving eldest daughter Angela in the care of his relatives.

His first collaboration with Arellano was a commission from the Manila City government. Arellano, who was supervising architect for the then Department of Public Works, was drawing up the design for the Metropolitan Theater on the orders of then Mayor Thomas Earnshaw.

Monti-Arellano tandem

Monti's sculptures were commissioned the building's design—Arellano had designed the niche in art deco—the president and his daughter, that period. The Italian sculptor's works—"Siamese Dancers" and "Oriental Dancers"—can be found on the building's facade. The sculptures, however, were taken to Roman Hall, represent Filipino cultures in the theater's area. Two more sculptures, "Athari" and "Fire," were placed in the lobby, near the entrance leading to the theater.

Inside the main theater are seven relief panels, done in concrete each. Three of them are on the left side of the stage—"Mother and child with swans," "Mother and child on a windy day" and "Magandang Umaga (Good Morning)." On the right side are the panels "Woman with birds," "Woman pouring water" and "Woman with sun and birds." The seventh relief panel is on top of the stage, featuring several groups of people.

After the Metropolitan Theater, the Arellano-Monti tandem was commissioned to work on the Rizal City Municipal Hall (now the University of the Philippines Rizal campus main building). Researchers credit Monti for the Art Deco sculptures of the "Mother" gracing its entrance, and the relief of a man and a woman at the dome of the building.

Monti also worked with National Artist for Sculpture Guillermo Tolentino on the Bonifacio Monument in 1933. The statue, which can be seen today at the Caloocan City rotunda, commemorates Bonifacio's struggle for independence as the leader of the Katipunan.

UST teaching post

In 1948, the University of Santo Tomas offered Monti a teaching post at the College of Architecture and Fine Arts (CAFA) where he was tasked to develop its sculpture program. UST Rector Father Angel de Miguel Gil gave him one of his biggest commissions—to create the UST main building with statues of Aristotle, St. Augustine and William Shakespeare, among others, to represent philosophy, literature and liberal arts. But the plan was discontinued in 1951 and only 13 of the originally planned 30 statues were completed. The 4th-foot statue of St. Thomas Aquinas, which Monti was supposed to chisel, never came to be.

Monti also handed the cell of the Catholic Church to produce religious figures in bronze or with Jose Zaragoza. He was commissioned by the Dominican Order to create a mural of the Our Lady of La Naval and the Battle of Lepanto. The relief panel, divided into three sections, can be seen at the facade of the Sto. Domingo Church in Quezon City. The concrete cast in silver finish shows the intervening respect both Spaniards and Filipinos moved to the image and the miraculous hold they share. Monti and Zaragoza also did a cast of St. Dominic de Guzman, the founder of the Order of Preachers, which is now embossed at the right side of the church's facade.

In 1953, he accepted a major commission for the Philippine International Fair, a project of President Elpidio Quirino. For the fair, he created five allegorical statues which he called "Filipinas" and the "Four Freedoms"—Freedom of Expression, Freedom of Religion, Freedom from Want and Freedom from Fear.

Fatal car crash

But death knocked on Monti's door quite early. After finishing the casts of Gaines John Bosco and Dominic Savio at the Don Bosco Technical College in Mandaluyong City, he was in high spirits because he was about to be knighted in the Papal Order of St. Gregory the Great, the highest honor a lay person can receive from the Vatican. Six days before the ceremony, however, he met a car accident, suffering internal injuries which led to his death on Aug. 11, 1958. He was 70 years old.

Teaching and living side by side with noted UST Cebu faculty members such as Gaby Dominguez and Reclamed Archer Valentin Sibulan, Carlos "Botong" Francisco, and Vicente Manansala, Monti was a class of his own. He, the Italian sculptor never forgot to show his appreciation for the country that took him in during the lowest point of his career.

It is, therefore for the March 1950 issue of the Varsitarian, UST's official student publication, Monti expressed his gratitude to the Philippines: "I do fervently wish that I could train our young Filipino artist in the art of sculpture to carry on the work I started. I will die happy that to my humble way, I could have repaid partially the hospitality that the adopted country has given me for the last 25 years."

ST. JOHN Baptist

ST. MATHUND of Poitiers at the UST

ST. DOMINIC Savio at Don Bosco College

SALMESI Dancer on the Metropolitan Theater

THE RELIEF panel of Our Lady of La Naval on the Sto. Domingo Church

MetroBriefs

Blast hits QC factory

AN EXPLOSION in a tank in the silent gallery of a recycling factory in Quezon City early yesterday morning although no one was hurt. Insp. Jo-Ann Arienza of the QC Police District said the blast was caused by an accumulation of explosive debris which was buried in front of the Adamar Development Corp. on Governor Pond, Barangay Bunsa at around 1:30 a.m. Police said it was unlikely that the incident was connected to the series of bombings that shook Metro Manila on Father Manila Bureau was investigators, it could have been done by angry residents due to the continuous operation of the factory despite their complaints," he added. The factory, France said, produces powder of "by burning anti-rabies virus. Residents, the police said, the blast to have been caused by the blast noise emanating from the factory. There were also reports in the past of noise constantly throwing stones at the factory, France said.

Nancy C. Carvajal

NBI gets high-tech

THE UNITED States Embassy last formally turned over $120,000 or P6.2-million worth of forensic equipment to the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI). Mrs. Ma. Corazon Ajoy, NBI director, said the equipment will help the bureau's Questioned Document Division (QDD) execute effective Palmer Mafia's said among the donated equipment were updated software's like Gargoyle and Paraform Suite, used for the examination of hard disk devices like cell phones, IBM hard disk drive and personal digital assistants (PDA). Gargoyle, Mafia explained, allows an investigator to examine hard disk and locate any software typically used by hackers and cyber terrorists. He added that the US Embassy donated gears that Forensic Division — among the most advanced forensic computers — and the Cellebrite for tools Ad Hoc Laptops. "The laptops will enable us to conduct investigations at the crime scene without having to bring computers containing evidences to our laboratory," the NBI executive official said. The NBI Information Technology Division Search (ITDS) professional, which allows an investigator to search a suspect's computer without booting any software into the hard drive.

Margaux C. Ortiz

Nelasaq 90

METRO Philippine Air Force Col. Rogelio G. Nelasaq, a World War II veteran and hero, died on June 13 at the age of 90. He is survived by wife Josie; children: retired Col. Rodolfo Nelasaq and Edna; retired Col. Ricardo Nelasaq Jr.; Lilibeth of the Air Materiel Wing Savings and Loan Association Inc.; Lt. Col. Rodito Nelasaq and Zony Ong, Roger Nelasaq and Lelai; grandchildren Philip, Rochelle, Noel, Joshuah, Hannah, Ryan, Rose Ann, Raymond, Cheryl and Randy; great-grandchildren Adgelo and Kayla; brother-in-law and friends. His body lies at the Jesus Rizal Chapel in La Funeraria Paz, Manila Memorial Park Jacod, Parañaque City. He will be buried today at the Manila Memorial Park in Parañaque City after the 9:00 a.m. Mass.

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
GLOBAL Pinoy
Editor Gerry Lirio
SUNDAY, JULY 16, 2006

THE CLEAR BLUE skies frame the bungalow on Agila Street, Cupaya, Nueva Ecija that serves as a monument to a young man's triumph as a migrant worker.

A dream house six years in the making

By Jove G. Contreras
Contributor

'Once while having lunch at the house made of second-hand lumber and bamboo posts, the septic tank burst. Imagine how disgusting the smell was. We stopped eating; for the rest of the day we were just laughing'

BACHELOR FERDINAND "FERDIE" GUIAM, 40, OF CUYAPO, Nueva Ecija, fondly remembers the family's dilapidated old house. It took him years to earn enough money to have the house renovated.

It is now a modern bungalow.

"When I was a kid, I promised my parents I would work hard to earn enough money to build a new house," Guiam told the Inquirer.

Guiam finished BS Medical Technology at Central Luzon University-Manila (CLU) in 1996. Though he worked as a medical technologist in hospitals for a while after passing the board examination, he realized "being a medical technologist was not a rewarding career in the Philippines."

In 1998, a doctor of Medical Medical Clinic, where he was working at the time, asked him if he wanted to be the florist of Seasons Tropical Flowers in Ermita, Manila. He accepted the job that became his stepping stone to overseas. And it was also where Guiam realized he had a skill to flower arrangement.

The skill would bring him to Saudi Arabia where, from 1999 to 1997, he worked as a flower arranger at the Intercontinental & Inter-Continental in Umbul Albaten, earning enough money for the renovation of the old family house.

ONCE upon a time in this old nipa hut, a little boy, who would become a medical technologist, then later a florist, nurtured a dream of providing a good life for his parents.

Construction of their new house began in 1994.

"I was fortunate to land a good job that paid enough for my family's financial needs. Every other year, I would return home, inviting relatives for the construction of our house in Nueva Ecija," he said.

In 1999, while the construction was still ongoing, he decided to quit his job and return to the Philippines, finding it hard to cope with the sudden decrease in his salary following the Gulf War.

Floating florist

But that same year, Guiam read that the Singapore Maritime Corporation, westerners agent for Princess Cruise, was looking for a florist. He applied for the job and was accepted.

He became the first florist to work on what was then the world's biggest ship, M/V Grand Princess.

"On a florist in various cruise lines of Princess, I was able to build my dream house, support my siblings and parents, (and) send my nieces and nephews to college," Guiam said.

Guiam has been working as a florist in different Princess ships, his contract expiring every 120 months.

On board, he doubles as a barber for PR (photo and hairdresser. He also sells flower and Globe prepaid cards to his colleagues.

Still building

"Whenever I start abroad, I make it a point to send money for the construction of our house. I monitor developments by calling my parents and the people concerned," he said.

The old house was made of second-hand lumber, plywood, and aluminum. Crooked bamboo poles served as posts. The floor, made of hard matting, was raised about 1.5 meters from the ground.

Despite its modest appearance, the old house was filled with memories for Guiam and his family.

He recalled how once, when the family was having lunch, the septic tank suddenly burst.

"Just imagine how disgusting the smell was. We stopped eating. Then, for the rest of the day, we were just laughing," he said.

The toilet was outside the house so, to get to it, family members crossed a bridge connecting it to the house. One time, Guiam's mother fell to the ground as she crossed the narrow bridge.

"The house was small and constrictive, but we had a lot of unforgettable memories. I have eight siblings (including three sisters). Our toilet would ... scare us that the house could collapse)."

Celebration of the new house took six years. The new house, where his parents live now, has two bedrooms, two toilets, and a garden near the front gate. It also has a sala, a dining room and a garage. This time, the septic tank is underground.

Guiam's dream of owning a house opposite the old house has been achieved and he also owns an apartment unit in Imugan, Nueva Ecija.

"(At) 40 years I have no liabilities (of) credit (I) owe to (a) hard work and patience ... I hope others will (continue) dreaming and working hard," he said.

THE DREAMER Guiam at the balcony of the Diamond. "I got everything I have asked for."

Invest in land only for use as residence or business

By Francisco J. Calayan
Contributor

THE WIFE OF AN OVERSEAS FILIPINO worker whose husband remits to her $300 or P15,000 monthly asked if she should invest in real estate because the value of land will always go up.

My general comments are:

• If you just want to invest in land because you believe or are advised it will go up in value, I suggest you think this over very carefully. Land, as an investment, is generally an illiquid investment. It is something you cannot sell very quickly if you need cash.

• The value of land has a good chance of going up in the long term but the money you can make will depend on when you can sell the property. If somebody tells you that your property has gone up in value, those are just words until you actually find a buyer at the price you want. If your neighbor's lot is sold for let's say, P200,000, it doesn't mean your lot, even if it is the same size will be sold at the same price or better. It all depends on whether there is a buyer at the time you want to sell.

• Unfortunately, many have lost money on real estate because they were forced to sell at the wrong time. Many more have lost money because the banks foreclosed their property. They did not realize that they only had money for the down payment and could not keep up with the installment payments and/or the maintenance of the property.

• Before you make that investment in real estate, ask yourself first if it is suited to your needs. Is your purpose in buying this lot to build your own home? Or is your purpose just to protect your savings and hope that it will grow in value in the future? If it is to build your own home, then it is a life goal and is certainly worthwhile provided your income can support the amortization payments and all the attendant expenses such as real estate taxes, maintenance costs, etc.

• If however, you are doing this purely to grow your money, make sure that the increase in value will give you returns that are at least higher than the average annual inflation rate of 7%, given all the risks and expenses that go with real estate ownership.

• For example, let's say you bought a property worth P500,000 (5 years ago with P150,000 down payment and installment payments of P4,500/mo (10.5% annual interest for 15 years or 180 months. You paid a total cash over the 15 years of P674,000 not including the payment of real estate taxes every year and transfer costs. Let's say the property appreciated at an average rate of 7% per year and you sold it for P1,400,000 (in this 15th year. You collected P1,215,000 after paying capital gains tax of 6%. What was your gain on the investment over 15 years? The effective yield (gain) on this investment is only 4.79% per year. As an investment, you would have been better off investing in other types of investments such as long term bank deposits of government or private corporations. The average exciting rate of such investments is about 8.5% per year after tax. Moreover, these types of investments are very easy to sell if you need cash.

• If you are decided on investing in real estate, then you must have a clear idea of what you will do with the real estate. I believe that real estate should only be purchased for own general purposes.

(NEXT 1/2)

Feeling rich even if she came home with nothing

By Glen S. Corrocho
Contributor

BAYAMBANG, PANGASINAN—Rosy Calungsod came home to her wedding aboard with nothing but dashed hopes. Still, she feels like millionaire today. She had hoped her life would change for the better when she returned from working abroad for a year and a half.

But the moment she stepped off the plane and called her husband Odilog to inform him of her unexpected arrival and to ask him to pick her up at the airport, she knew nothing had changed.

"I don't know you! I don't know anyone named Rosy!" Odilog angrily exclaimed. Her husband was drunk and was in his usual grouchy self in that state.

Calungsod was a part-time housewife and bakwater before she left. The mother of six and wife to an alcoholic husband who didn't have a regular job and who would hit her in drunken rages, she knew she needed a steady job to support the family and send her kids to school.

When a recruiter knocked on her door one morning in 2004, she quickly signed up for a two-year contract as a housekeep in Kuwait.

Three months later and with a heavy heart, she left her six kids in the care of her husband and went off to Canwait.

It was not long before she realized that being a domestic helper abroad was not a walk in the park, particularly as she had a rather cruel employer.

Working without pay

"My employer had a very bad temperament," she said. "She would hit me for every mistake I made and throw away the leaves I wrote to my family."

After three months of working from morning till late at night without pay and no communication with her family, she decided to escape with the help of a Sri Lankan colleague.

Calungsod asked her agency's Filipina office for sermigrapers. She was introduced to a Pakistani household. Her second employer was a lot more than the first and she finally received a salary and got in touch with her family again.

But she was dismissed by her second employer after she contracted a minor hand injury at work. She was sent to another Kuwaiti employer.

"I worked for three employers over seven years," she said. "I received a regular salary and was treated fairly."

Although she didn't have problems with the Kuwaiti couple who employed her, her employers' adolescent son used to force her into having sex with him.

Calungsod managed to resist his advances but "after a few months, I knew it was time to go home."

Nothing changed

The Kuwaiti couple were reluctant to let her go but understood her predicament. But she had to buy her own plane ticket since she was unable to finish her contract.

After talking to her husband, however, she realized that the month had changed at home so she decided to seek refuge in the house of a distant relative in Cavite.

"I was devastated," she said. "I thought leaving the country would somehow improve my life but when I arrived with almost no savings and with a drunken husband that didn't even know me, I thought all my sacrifices were for nothing."

A month later, her husband went to Cavite to fetch her. Expressing love to her upon's, Calungsod was surprised that he was in a conciliatory mood. Odilog apologized for his behavior and asked her to go home with him. He was able to persuade her and the couple reclaimed to Pangasinan.

Regular job

Back home, Calungsod found it was not just her husband's behavior that had changed. It turned out that the money she had left for Kuwait, Odilog finally got a regular job as personal aide to the town's parish priest, Fr. Manuel Sison.

Working under Fr. Sison, Odilog managed to reduce his drinking and control his temper. The drunken episode on Calungsod's return was apparently becoming a rarity.

"That time [referring to the time when his wife called him from the airport], I attended a party and got drunk as I wasn't myself. I rarely drink commitment, besides, they were using my name number that time which I didn't know," he said.

Calungsod's blessings didn't stop there. Much to her surprise, Odilog saved all the money she sent, putting her way to Kuwait. With their savings, the couple put up a small store in their neighborhood. With Odilog's earnings and the money they got from their small business, Calungsod hopes her coworker will soon be a thing of the past.

"I left for Kuwait hoping that our lives would improve," she said. "Sacrifice small problems that my husband and I had when I returned. I am very happy with the results of this risky I took. I didn't come home a millionaire but, somehow, seeing as improvements in our lives makes me feel like one."

LOVE IS LOVELIER THE SECOND TIME AROUND: In the company of three of their six children, Rosy (right) and husband Odilog finally renew their wedding vows before Fr. Manuel Bravo (left) upon her return to Bayambang, Pangasinan.

Invest in land . . .

From page A-9

a) for your personal residence

b) for a specific business purpose that will give you good returns of at least more than the inflation rate of 3% p.a.

● If you really want to invest in real estate with your P15,000 per month, you might want to choose a property that requires a monthly cash payment of about P7,000 only so that you do not put all your money into real estate alone. This way you would not be completely dependent on one investment, which is not even a liquid investment.

● If you so decide to buy, see your investigate the legitimacy of the property you are buying. Do not buy property that you have not seen. Always check the Transfer Certificate of Title (TCT) directly with the Registrar of Deeds to make sure that the TCT is clear and that it really corresponds to the property that was shown to you.

● Since real estate is normally for the long-term and you will possibly leave it as an inheritance, you must understand and discuss with your spouse and/or your children in whose name the TCT should be. It would be better if you can consult with a lawyer.

● It is best not to buy properties without a TCT. There are safer options to start a property.

I believe that this is just like renting a property and should be treated as such to avoid issues in the future with your heirs. If your heirs end up owning the property, then that is their homes and good luck.

Property for business

Before you buy a property for a business, you must negate the decision to buy the property from the decision on the business. The final question really is:

Do you have to buy the property for the business you want or can you have your business even if you just lease/rent your property.

Francisco J. Colayco is an entrepreneur, a venture developer and financial advisor. He is the chair of the Colayco Foundation for Education and the author of three bestsellers: Philos Within Your Reach (2004) Book of the Year for Business and Economics Awardee), Making Your Money Work, and Para Pahigalo Mayikhuak. He is a member of the Registered Financial Planners Inc. USA and is available for talks, seminars and workshops. Learn more about his advocacy on www.colaycofoundation.com or email info@foundation.com. His books are available at National Bookstore, Powerbooks, (0917) 8027222, (2) 8151681

Three DH leaders honored in Hong Kong

THREE FILIPINAS WORKING AS domestic helpers in Hong Kong were recently cited by a Filipino community newspaper for their outstanding achievements and contribution to their respective host countries.

The three were among a dozen current Filipino workers nominated for the title "Most Outstanding OFW 2006" award given out by The Sun to celebrate its 10th anniversary on June 4, 2006 in Central, Hong Kong.

Handing out the awards were Philippine Secretary Patricia A. Sto. Tomas, Consul General Alejandrino A. Mosses and The Sun publisher Leo A. Dandoloff.

The winners were: Gloria Sapalo Cervantes, "Most Outstanding OFW"; Josefina Carolina Pingkihan, first runner-up; and Teodora B. Nieva, second runner-up.

Below are bio-sketches of the winners.

GLORIA SAPALO CERVANTES, President, Federation of Iloilo Associations, Confederation Asuncion

For Gloria Sapalo Cervantes, winning the "Most Outstanding OFW 2006" award could not have come at a more opportune time. After working for 21 long years as an overseas Filipino worker in Hong Kong, she had the sad duty goodbye on June 13.

"Hanang Ga," she told and it's a yellow, and that though she would miss the many friends that she made in Hong Kong, she was not going for good. She was only going home to Iloilo all, but five children have all completed their studies, and she had saved enough money to start her own kindergarten school in her Iloilo hometown.

But having a conscientious worker mainly loyalty, she started a bit about a 6th that was destroyed

CERVANTES: Most Outstanding

PINGKIHAN: First runner-up

NIEVA: Second runner-up

to divide the Bonggo Federation, of which she was the head.

"The Bonggo have been to me, and I'm worried that when I leave, they will decide to split up," she says.

For over the opposite, she hopes the much younger officers of the Federation would be able to patch things up.

Exemplary civic leader

Hanang Ga was cited by the three-man panel that decided on the winners of the Outstanding OFW Award as an "exemplary community leader."

In particular, they noted her following achievements: (1) helping raise a fellow OFW from committing suicide in 1986; (2) spearheading fund-raising projects in Hong Kong for a church and school in Iloilo; (3) helping promote tourism in the Philippines through two "Ati-Atihan" festivals she organized in HK in 2000 and 2002; (4) sending all her five sons through college while working as an OFW; and (5) embodying "excellence" by leading groups through championships in quiz shows and dancing competitions.

Employer's affection

Add to these the accolade given her by her employer for the past 16 years. "Gloria is a person who not only has strong moral beliefs but also takes action to support those beliefs. She speaks kindly and humbly but is not confrontational. No matter how strongly she feels about an issue, she does not lose her temper. In fact, in all the years she has worked for me, I have never seen her lose her temper. She is an exemplar and easy to talk to," the employer, Veronica Lee, says in part.

The letter then adds: "There are no words that can describe the affection that we have for Gloria. She is family."

Asked what her employer's attributes are for winning was, Hanang Ga said with a smile: "All the time when his wife called him from the airport, I attended a party and got drunk as I wasn't myself. I rarely drink commitment, besides, they were using my name number that time which I didn't know," he said.

Calungsod's blessings didn't stop there. Much to her surprise, Odilog saved all the money she sent, putting her way to Kuwait. With their savings, the couple put up a small store in their neighborhood. With Odilog's earnings and the money they got from their small business, Calungsod hopes her coworker will soon be a thing of the past.

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CERVANTES: Most Outstanding

PINGKIHAN: First runner-up

NIEVA: Second runner-up

concern for her fellow migrant workers have been recognized.

"Although also, in judging OFWs any common Mr. Happy adopted may place gain any given gonna be to community . . . to be considered outstanding," she said.

Josie also praised the head of the panel of judges, Labor attaché Fernando Jalen.

"I commend Labor, the head of the judges," She added. "We're within (the POEA) new responsibility [voices out for optional."

But Josie would have wanted to see more nominees to the contest because she believes there are a lot of deserving OFWs out there who should be recognized. She also thinks there should be more specific rules and guidelines for the contest.

In inviting nominations in the month, The Sun specified that the nominee must have been an overseas Filipino worker for at least 10 years, must be of good moral character, and must have contributed to the betterment of her/his family and community at that here or in Hong Kong.

But despite the slight misgivings, Josie says the search for the Most Outstanding OFW was a welcome initiative.

TEODORA B. NIEVA, President, Overseas Filipino Workers Investors and Entrepreneurs (OFWIE)

Teodora B. Nieva of "Ineia" prepares her members for their eventual return to the Philippines by helping them acquire new skills through OFWIE's numerous livelihood projects.

On learning that she bagged third honors in The Sun's Search for Most Outstanding OFW contest, she said she was overjoyed as she did not expect to win.

"I'm not exposed. They are more active. I wasn't only in the nominations," she said.

She was all praises for the event, saying it was a magnificent effort to give due recognition to OFWs.

"It's nice. They are recognizing the achievements of the leaders. There are too many organizations and leaders whose achievements are overlooked—even if these people work without anything in return, Nakakatuwa iyong ganun."

Dante's employers, who have always been supportive of hers and OFWIE, awaited her to a reception this Sunday upon learning that she had won the award.

India: Peace with Pakistan threatened by blasts

MUMBAI—INDIAN PRIME MINISTER Manmohan Singh warned Friday the peace process with Pakistan could be derailed by the deadly train bombings and alleged the attackers had support "from across the border."

The premier, on his first visit to Mumbai since the blasts that killed 179 and injured nearly 800, warned the peace process would struggle to advance unless Pakistan cracked down on militants operating from its soil.

"The terrorists responsible for the blasts were supported by elements across the border without which they cannot hit with such an effect," Singh said.

"I explained to the government of Pakistan ... that if such acts of terrorism are not controlled, it is exceedingly difficult for any government to carry forward what may be called the normalization of relations and the peace process," he said.

Pakistan immediately denied Singh's claims.

"These allegations are unsubstantiated, we have already rejected them," Foreign office spokesperson Tasnim Aslam told AFP.

But the spokesperson said the peace process was a "bipartite matter," noting: "It is in the interest of both Pakistan and India and the region, that is why we believe that the peace process must be continued and carried forward."

Senior police in Ahmedabad on Tuesday's rush-hour bombings beat the hallmarks of Lashkar-e-Taiba, a pro-Pakistan Islamist group based in divided Kashmir that has been blamed for previous attacks in India.

India and Pakistan in 2004 embarked on a peace process in the near six-decade dispute over Kashmir, the subject of two of the three wars fought by the nuclear-armed rivals since independence from Britain.

Efforts to resolve the dispute over the Himalayan region—which both countries control in part and claim in full—have been slow, with a date for the next round of talks in a foreign secretary's level still to be agreed.

Shri Shri Ravi Shankar, under pressure to produce a breakthrough, said they were pursuing "important leads" but added the identity of the group behind Tuesday's blasts remained "hazy."

"We're exploring every single angle. We have some picture in view but it's very hazy," added Ismail commissioner of police Anjai Singh said. AFP

2 California fires merge into a single blaze

LOS ANGELES—TWO VAST fires east of Los Angeles merged late Friday after scorching tens of thousands of hectares and destroying hundreds of buildings near the famed Joshua Tree National Park.

Thousands of firefighters battled the blaze that swept through mountain scrub east of Los Angeles for a fifth day, threatening some 3,000 more buildings after engulfing 45 homes and 118 other buildings in an area made famous in Western films.

The California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection said two civilians and nine firefighters had suffered minor injuries and that mandatory evacuations remained in effect for part of San Bernardino County.

"The two fires are together since Friday afternoon," firefighter spokesperson Eldred Johnson told AFP.

The two fires met in the heavy of the San Bernardino National Forest, where hectares of dry wood unwatered by years of drought provided a ready tinder. Authorities, though secretive also made it difficult for firefighters to battle the blaze.

The two blazes have scorched 25,000 hectares over the past week.

Thousands of firefighters battling the blaze were preparing Saturday for another day of high temperatures and dry weather, combined with dangerous canyon winds.

California declared a state of emergency Thursday for southern parts of the state, with fires sweeping an area some 200 km east of Los Angeles.

Johnson said there was still no evacuation order for residents of the Big Bear mountain ski resort region, where thousands of southern California residents have vacation homes.

Nearly 1,000 people were forced to evacuate their homes on Tuesday in half a dozen towns, including Summerland, where some of between 90 and 100 homes have burned since the 1960s. AFP

SMOKE rises from a back burn of the Sawtooth Complex fire near Morongo Valley, Calif., July 14. Thousands of firefighters struggled to keep a steady merged Sawtooth fire and Millard fire from gaining a foothold in the populated San Bernardino Mountains. AP

UN Council edges closer to vote on N. Korea

UNITED NATIONS—THE SECURITY Council late Friday narrowed differences over the manchurian 10% sanctions against North Korea for its missile tests, with only one sticking point standing in the way of a soon-expected Security, diplomats said.

French Ambassador Jean-Marc de La Sablière, the council president for July, told reporters after closed-door consultations that the 15-member body would resume consultations on a revised draft sometime at 9 p.m. (13:00 GMT) Saturday.

The compromise text "is ready to be put to a vote we hope for action tomorrow," Japanese ambassador Kenzo Oshima said.

The remaining sticking point is the text's reference to Chapter Seven of the UN Charter, which can authorize mandatory sanctions or even the use of force.

China has made clear it will not back new UN resolutions.

But US ambassador John Bolton signaled that even sanctions that reference, the draft would still be legally binding. His comments appeared to indicate that the US-sponsors were prepared to drop the reference to mollify the Chinese.

"It is not required to have a binding resolution to use the word Chapter Seven," he stated, adding that he had been instructed by his government to seek a vote tomorrow.

The compromise text was thrashed out in days-long haggling involving ambassadors of the five veto-holding permanent members of the council—Britain, China, France, Russia and the United States—as well Japan. AFP

WORLD BRIEFS

10 killed in Iraq

BAGHDAD—At least 10 people were killed across Iraq Friday, including 13 Iraqi soldiers in an attack on their checkpoint near the north city of Tikrit, security officials said. Gunmen "came in two vehicles and opened fire on the soldiers who were guarding the checkpoint and killed at the 13, including an officer," Col. Mahmud Abdulrahman, Salahaddin, where a curfew was imposed after the attack in an area last month. At least seven people were killed after Friday prayers in a bombing outside a Sunni mosque, a security official said. In the restive northern city of Mosul four people were killed, including two policemen, in a suicide car bomb attack in the city's eastern Mathuna neighborhood, police said. Also in Mosul, a policeman and a bodyguard of a judge were shot dead in separate attacks by gunmen, police said. A soldier was killed and three others were wounded by a roadside attack in Baghdad's Zafaraniyah neighborhood. AFP

Jury orders Jacko to pay damages

LOS ANGELES—A California jury awarded $800,000 in damages Friday to an associate of "Kingpin Pop" Michael Jackson for unpaid expenses arising from work he did at the troubled star's Neverland ranch. But the jury in a separate courtroom also said the associate, Marc Schaffel, owed Jackson $900,000 based on a counterclaim filed by the singer. The 47-year-old pop star also has recently been hit by a lawsuit from Schaffel, who initially sued for $5.8 million before the claim was reduced to $4 million. AFP

Blair's Labor deemed 'cleaner' than last gov't

LONDON—Britain Prime Minister Tony Blair's governing Labor party is "cleaner" than Ken Clarke's before a decade-and-a-half in power nine years ago, according to an opinion poll published on Saturday. The poll for the Daily Telegraph found that 69 percent of those questioned were either "very clean" or "fairly clean" compared with 63 percent who thought the same of the Tory government in 1991. AFP

HEAD BUTT
Matador Antonio Ferrera is surrounding a Victorino Martin fighting bull July 16, during the last corrida of the San Fermin festivities in Pamplona, Spain.

Napoleon fish could meet its Waterloo

THE NAPOLEON FISH: Barring for survival.

HUAFA—THE NAPOLEON FISH, EMperor of tropical coral reefs, is battling for survival. Often illegally fished, it is sold for high prices to Chinese buyers who prize its delicate flesh.

The latest attempt at smuggling this giant of the seas with a curious hump on its head occurred last month: 36 of the fish, known also as the humphead wrasse, were seized at Manado airport, on Indonesia's Sulawesi island.

They had been destined for the ornamental restaurants of Hong Kong, where one kilogram of the rare fish fetches $60 to $120.

Yvonne Sadovy from the World Conservation Union (IUCN) warns that one of the challenges facing the species is that it does not reproduce as readily as species such as sardines or anchovies.

The fish, which can weigh up to 200 kilograms and exceed two meters, does not reach sexual maturity until it is nearly 5 years old. Rice Rahmawati aims to capture young prey, which have not yet had a chance to procreate.

"They are practically threatened. If nothing is done," warns Sadovy, an expert on the fish from the University of Hong Kong. AFP

US public, private schools comparable in performance

WASHINGTON—THE FEDERAL EDUcation Department reported Friday that, in reading and math, children attending public schools generally do as well as or better than comparable children in private schools, with the exception of two key subjects: reading, where the private school children did better.

The report, which compared fourth- and eighth-grade reading and math scores from nearly 7,000 public schools and over 300 private schools in 2003, also found that conservative Christian schools lagged significantly behind public schools when it came to eighth-grade math.

The study, carrying the imprimatur of the National Center for Education Statistics, part of the education department, was commissioned by the Educational Testing Service and delivered to the department last year.

It went through a lengthy peer review and includes an extended section of caveats about its limitations and outlining such a comparison of public and private schools "of modest utility."

In release, on a summer Friday, was made without a news conference or comment from Education Secretary Margaret Spellings.

Bob Wise, president of the National Education Association, the union for millions of teachers, said the findings showed that public schools were "doing an outstanding job" and that if the income had been favorable to private schools, "there would have been press conferences and glowing statements about private schools." AFP

Ignorance breeds children among Kenya teens

By Lucie Pierrerumaux

NAIROBI—MARGARET WAIGUMO huddles her baby in a squalid house in the morning. "Sweetie" she's out of Kiandu, joining the growing number of teen parents in Kenya, victims of taboos that forbids sex education.

Waigumo, 16, became pregnant two years ago after being forced into prostitution to help her family after they were evicted from their home. Her mother, a farmer of the 500-Kenyan-shilling ($6.80) monthly rent.

"Some of my friends advised me that instead of lying in poverty, you can get some money through commercial sex," she recalls, switching her fingers in the uncomfortable baby.

She had never had sex before, never received any information about contraception, and would end up selling her body in order to a local pub for 500 shillings if they used a condom, double that without protection.

"I didn't know that contraception or family planning existed," she said. "I didn't know that I could get pregnant." Many teenage pregnancies in Kenya—where 51 percent of the 31 million people are under 19, according to a 2003 study—are blamed on lack of information about sex and reluctance that forces on discussing it with children.

According to that study, more than 25 percent of Kenyan girls between 15 and 19 are either pregnant or mothers. Eighty-five percent of 15- to 19-year-olds and 72 percent of those between 20 and 24 do not use contraceptives.

In addition, 79 percent of all adolescents engage in unprotected sex. About 1.1 million Kenyans are HIV positive and some 1.8 million people have died of HIV/AIDS since 1984, it says.

"The veil of silence on sexual issues has to be removed," said Lucy Kangiwa, a lecturer at Kenyatta Egerton University. "It's a taboo in African society to talk about sex. It is always hidden in a bit of secrecy in Kenya."

The situation is more dramatic in slums due to lack of access to condoms and other services, information, and poverty even drives sexual issues openly with their children.

"There is a distance between my mother and me," says Waigumo. "I'm angry against everything, against education, family and circumstances which forced me" to sell her body, she adds.

Yvonne Wakiruru, a 16-year old orphan who lives with her cousin in Soweto, has been engaging in unprotected sex since she was 14 and says an abstinence.

"My cousin is selling illegal beers but the business is not good," she says. "To get money, sometimes I go to wash clothes, sometimes I go for commercial sex. I don't have access to any condoms, cryptocure anything.

"The only thing I can prevent myself is pregnancy, taking the safe days," Wakiruru says.

An orphan, she had no parents to educate her but other youth here say their mothers and fathers are reluctant if not totally opposed to discussing the facts of life.

"Our parents are not in a position to say something," said Soweto's two Michael Nyaga. "They normally think it's not the right time and I've never found a parent to talk to." AFP

JAPANESE ARAB
Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi crowns a Kabuki-dancing bit child in Petra, Jordan July 14.

The WORLD

Editor Lawrence K. Quesa

Hezbollah declares open war on Israel

SMOKE rises from a bridge after an Israeli air raid in the Bekaa region, on the highway between Beirut and Damascus, Lebanon, July 15. AP

BEIRUT—ISRAEL KEPT UP ITS blistering offensive against Lebanon Saturday after Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah defiantly declared open war in a conflict that appears to be spiraling dangerously out of control despite international calls for restraint.

Israel pounded Lebanon in a series of fresh raids, dousing suburbs into bridges and power stations and killing four people on the fourth day of fighting that has so far claimed the lives of around 50 people on both sides.

Emerging unscathed after Israeli air strikes late Friday on his home and office in Dahiel, Lebanon's southern suburbs, Nasrallah warned: "We entered an open war, you will get an open war."

And in a dramatic new development, Nasrallah boasted that Hezbollah attack-and-missile warship patrolling off the coast of Lebanon, telling his supporters in "watch it burning."

Israel said four Israeli servicemen were missing after the attack on the vessel, which reports said was hit either by a rocket or an explosives-laden drone. Another civilian ship, believed to be Egyptian, was also hit and set ablaze, Israel said.

While the international community has issued urgent appeals for restraint, world powers appear divided over how to deal with the crisis, which erupted after Hezbollah guerrillas seized two Israeli soldiers in an attack on the volatile Lebanon-Israeli border on Wednesday.

The attack opened up a new battleground in the Middle East following the massive Israeli onslaught against Gaza launched after the capture of another soldier by Palestinian militants during a cross-border raid.

Israel is under fire from some members of the UN Security Council for using "disproportionate force" against Lebanon and Gaza.

But at an emergency Council debate on the crisis on Friday, the the United States stood alone in refusing to even condemn (or) Israel. From Israel, instead laying the blame firmly at the feet of Iran and Syria, which both back Hezbollah and the Palestinian Islamist movement Hamas.

Lebanon is virtually cut off from the outside world after Israel imposed an air and sea blockade, launched repeated strikes on the country's only international airport and bombed the main highway to neighboring Syria.

And in a sign that there would be no early easing of the crisis, Israel army chief Gen. Dan Halutz warned his forces would continue to strike Hezbollah and other infrastructure targets in Lebanon. AFP

As crisis strikes, Lebanese gov't disappears

By Hassan M. Fattah

BEIRUT—AS THE GOVERNMENT OF PRIME Minister Fouad Siniora faced the country's most significant crisis in a decade, its officials disappeared from public view.

As the country underwent the third day of Israeli bombardment on Friday, the Cabinet remained behind closed doors, reportedly brainstorming ideas for a solution. Officials and ministers who normally sought out the press suddenly switched off their cell phones or had assistants screening calls. There were no visits to bombed-out buildings, no photo opportunities at the hospital with the injured, and no fiery speeches in defense of the country.

"The government is obviously incapable of talking to the head—Hezbollah. Long ago it did that," said Lamis Bassoul, 37, a lawyer at a private university in Beirut. Hezbollah, she said, now "makes decisions of war and peace, and acts as if it was the government."

Siniora became prime minister last July, seeking to build legitimacy for the government and restore independence from Syria, which had occupied Lebanon for 29 years until it was forced to withdraw last year. The prime minister promised to settle growing sectarian squabbles, restart Lebanon's faltering economy and reduce Hezbollah's firepower while supporting its right to resist.

"Hezbollah wants to play on the old rules and the government wants to play by new rules, but it doesn't want to actually change them," said Hassan al-Amin, a columnist with the pan-Arab daily newspaper al Hayat. "If they ask the Americans to do something about Israel, the Americans will ask them what they can offer in return. And today they can't offer anything."

The government, caught between the international community—which has demanded that it disarm Hezbollah, and the militant Shiite party, which has sought to undermine the government's authority, has been reduced to taking no stand and promising little action.

"We are trying to secure a comprehensive ceasefire and end the blockade—this is our priority now," Siniora said in a terse statement to reporters on Friday evening, before slipping back behind closed doors. AFP

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Sunday SPORTS

KENNETH Jonassen flashes the form that enabled him to beat Thelle Hidayat yesterday

Europe cuts Asia lead

By Manny R. Castillo

KENNETH JONASSEN HAD LITTLE TIME to prepare—although it hardly mattered what with his low seed in perfect shape. Gail Emms and Donn Kellogg played as great a weekend that any amount of preparation by their Asian foes wouldn't have mattered.

Europe dropped what was a surrounding lead by Asia to 3-4 late night after Jonassen won for the first time in his career against indon Thelle Hidayat and Emms and Kellogg annihilated their foes in the second day of the MVP Cup Asia vs Europe 2.

Coming in with only a week's training after a long break, Jonassen clogged it out with the reigning Finnish and Olympic champion Hidayat and prevailed, 21-17, 17-21, 21-12, in one of the most applauded matches of the 8,000,000 venue.

And despite his little preparation, Jonassen felt that he was in better shape than Hidayat.

"This time, I'll say that he [Hidayat] wasn't as fit as best," Jonassen said.

Hidayat, touted as a national hero in his homeland after that twin feat, is ranked a lowly 23rd in the world after battling an assortment of injuries, the latest of which has been a heel bruise that has prevented him from

EUROPE, A24

Asuncions play vital role for Asia team

By Marc Anthony Reyes

THE PHILIPPINES' REPRESENTATIVE TO Team Asia, siblings Bonnie and Bonnevie Asuncion, will play a pivotal role going against a fourth pair in today's last day of the MVP Cup 2 at the Araneta Coliseum.

The Asuncions will take on mixed doubles world No. 13 Tomas Laybourn and Kamilla Rytter Juhl on a day which stakes nine points to every match winner.

"There is a pressure on us because Asia's fate could depend on us," said Bonnevie who, along with her sister, enjoy the highest rankings in their career at 23rd from 42nd.

They are not actually that new to the situation. Last year, they lost to All-England champs Nathan Robertson and Gail Emms as Europe took a 7-5 lead with just two singles left. Fortunately, Chinese stars Lin Dan and Zhang Ning healed the region out by backing out victories in the end game.

The Asuncions have faced the Danish pair only once, yielding the match. It happened so long ago they could not remember the score.

"We will just try to take points and remove ties on each tally," said Bonnevie. "We won't think of winning eight away because that could either make us happy or sad depending on the outcome. It's better if we set a goal and try to achieve that, like win as many rallies as possible."

Came out hot

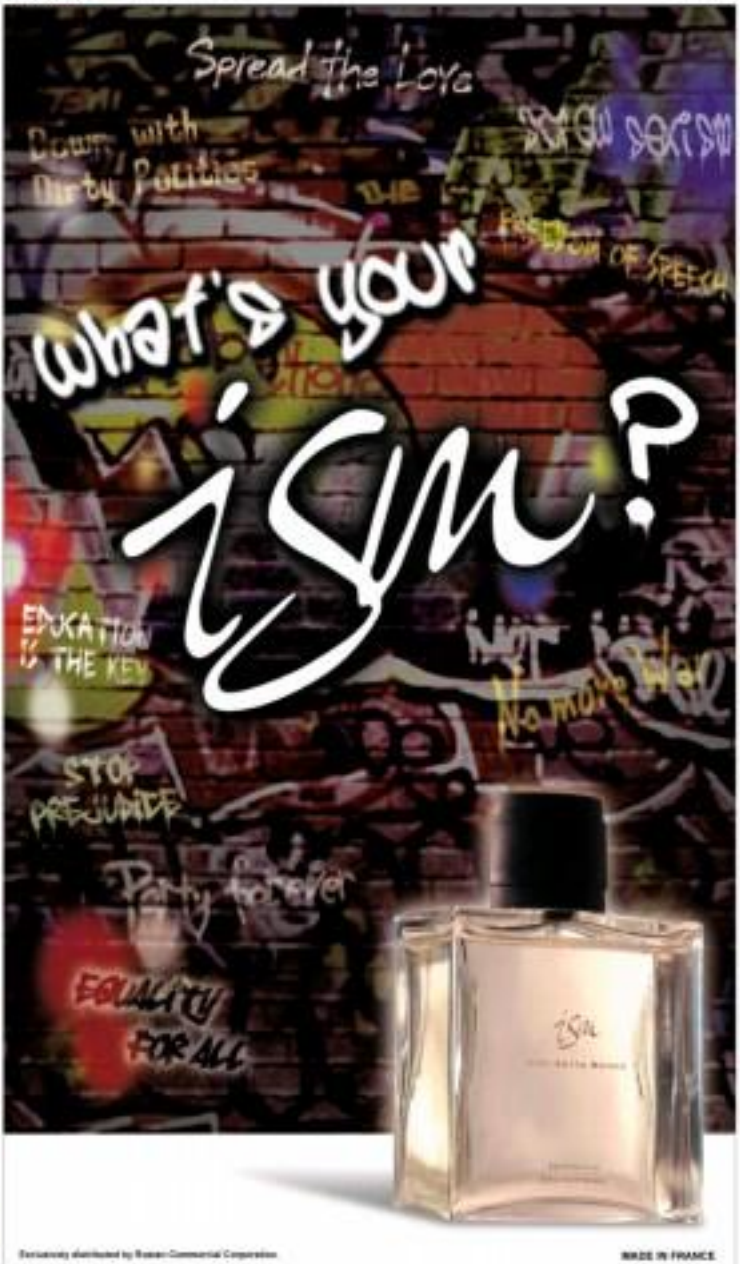
Last year, the 30 does-came out hot, flooring Robertson and Emms, sweeping across this year in the women's doubles, with a lopsided game that electrified the crowd and forced a stunning 15-12 first set romping the latter quickly to take the match at 15-1.

"We really hope the crowd will show up again to cheer us on," said Bonnie, who skipped a big tournament this month to concentrate on the MVP Cup 2 preparations.

In fact, their coach Indon Sutiono has flown in a former team to help them train. Four Korean shuttlers with world rankings have been providing the siblings beaten to world-class competition.

The Asuncions also got valuable tips from Indonesian aces for the inaugural MVP Cup.

KENNEVIE Asuncion



NBC finals: Pagadian battles Ozamiz cagers

PAGADIAN CITY—KISMANEEN TEAM Pagadian found its range in time to sink close Spring Cooking Oil Hardyboys, 86-75, Friday and avenge an all-south encounter finals in the 2000 Governor Rasmy NBC basketball championship here.

Playing catch-up most of the time, Mayor Sammy Gu's Diplomats surged ahead in the fourth quarter behind Rey Macias and Mike Orquillas to earn a shot at defending champion Dumalag Corn in the best-of-three finals starting tomorrow.

Noni Epondulan exploded for 24 points and helped the Cooking Oil Masters of NBC president Nathaniel "Toi" Padilla and Vice Mayor Aqui Flores control the game in the early going. But Epondulan failed to deliver at crunchtime.

"This is the fruit of our hard work," said Pagadian coach Segundo "Bong" Dela Cruz. "Despite trailing, my boys did not give up. We'll now have to think of Ozamiz."

The Explosives (no. 75-62) in the opener, but leveled the series Thursday and clinched the second finals spot Friday before their ecstatic hometown crowd.

The absence of Nadal Manuel and injured Gilbert Nicolasa's Spring Paramazan to the series sponsored by Panasonic, Solpicon Lines, Nacard's Spring Mineral Water, Spring Cooking Oil, Regent Foods, Holly Hightlegs, Mellowcard Pilsen Channel.

The Cooking Oil Masters led (38-44) at the turn and were still ahead 73-64 going into the final quarter. But Macias, Orquillas and Macias ignited a 9-zero rally that helped the Explosives tie the game around.

Macias finished with 22 points, while Orquillas, Leo Calimlimlim and Nuico added 18, 11 and 7-6, respectively.

The scores:

Pagadian (86)—Macias 22, Orquillas 18, Calimlimlim 11, Epondulan 9, Nuico 7, Manuel 5, Apor 5, Jumao-as 4, Tabanao 3, Pantaleon 2.

Ozamiz (75)—Epondulan 24, Gandeza 15, Arcega 13, Asistio 10, Abunda 6, Apao 5, Jumao-as 2, Tabanao 2.

Quarters: (20-18, 38-44, 73-64, 86-75)

RP-Air21 takes on Singapore in opener

GAME 1 TODAY
(Rizal Memorial Coliseum)
3 p.m.—RP-Air21 vs Singapore
5:30 p.m.—Manila vs Thailand
8 p.m.—Opening ceremony
1 p.m.—Utah vs Japan
6:30 p.m.—Hong Kong vs China

HONG KONG—TEAM RP-AIR 21 WILL BE taking on Singapore in the opener of the 2001 Jones Hong Shoulder international invitational basketball championship at the Hong Kong Coliseum on Sunday.

Brothers Yancy and Rainelli de Ocampo and slam dunk champion Ali Canaleta will power the Filipino dribblers described as "evenly matched talent" by team manager Lito Alvarez.

The Filipinos and the Singaporeans take the floor at 2 p.m. in one of four matches kicking off festivities to the tough eight-team tournament organized by the Hong Kong Basketball Association.

Other opening day matches will pit NBA Games champion Malaysia against Thailand at 5:30 p.m., United States against Japan at 7 p.m. and Hong Kong against China at 8:30 p.m.

The hour-long opening ceremonies will be held starting at 6 p.m.

"Based on early reports, this year's competition will be a lot tougher, but we're confident," said Alvarez. "We expect the hosts to do well since they have one more player than the limited Hong Kong and the Los Angeles-based American-Chinese federation last year," said Alvarez.

Alvarez, who tapped Bo Bernard and Johny Tann to handle the team this year, said Hong Kong and Thailand are the strongest of the seven NBA-biggest rivals in the tournament.

The top two teams in each group will advance to the crossover semis, with the winners disputing the title in a winner take all encounter.

The groupings:

Group A—Hong Kong, China, Malaysia, Thailand
Group B — Philippines, United States, Japan, Singapore.

Xavier School, Coach E offer cage clinics

XAVIER IS THE SECOND HIGH SCHOOL TO PARTner with the Coach E Basketball School, offering 16 sessions starting on July 16 at the Xavier Sports Center in San Juan.

And on a teaser to the Coach E approach in basketball training, International Basketball Academy president Yano Nanung yesterday said he is already mulling holding a July 28-30 camp for grade school students and July 27 (4 p.m.) for high school students at Xavier.

The teen will officially open with the San Beda Alabang classic opening on July 25. Complete details on will be held at the Xavier School on July 16 and Globalcity on July 20.

Call 631 1105 (Mobile) for details. Inquiries are also welcome at ibai@yahoo.com and www.ibai.com. Interested Xavier students must contact the names, age and t-shirt size of the students to be entered in the Xavier School Memorial Pavement, Powerade, Bullington, Accel and Brother Ranges.

RP-Air21 takes on Singapore in opener

SUMMER LEAGUE: San Antonio Spurs' Ian Mahinmi, of France, shoots against Dallas Mavericks' D.J. Mbenga (28), of Congo, during the Rocky Mountain Revion summer league basketballgame hosted by the Utah Jazz on Friday in Salt Lake City, Utah.

Warriors turn back Tamaraws

By Jeanine W. Pope

AN ILONGO-STRUCK UNIVERSITY OF THE EAST WARRIORS FOUND enough heroes in the second half to get them by. By the time the final buzzer sounded, it was the Far Eastern U Tamaraws who reeled sad.

Sparked by skipper Rainbow Custodio after the break, the Warriors outlasted the Tamaraws in overtime, 92-84, to achieve a semi-final spot in the UAAP men's basketball season tournament yesterday at the Moro Aquino Coliseum.

JAMES TODAY
(Moro Aquino Coliseum)
2 p.m.—MCAA vs Adamson (juniors)
4 p.m.—Warriors vs UP (juniors)

"(It) not only took the early lead in the tournament with a 2-0 count, it also validated its status as favorite by handing FEU a bad start in its title retention bid.

All that despite having five key players missing from midday with illnesses ranging from bum stomach to fever.

"I was worried," said UE coach Glenn Dumpayo. "In the first half, we were so tentative because of the last few days some of my players were unable to practice and when FEU employed a trap (defense), the players panicked."

The five players included Custodio, sophomore Jaime Martinez, Marcy Arellano, Elmer Espiritu and Rufito Sergonia.

Rainbow Custodio played a clutch role in the Warriors' comeback, shooting in 12 of his 16 points from beyond the arc to provide UE with much needed outside threat.

Mark Barkley also came through for the Warriors, blocking a potential game-winning basket by FEU's Richard Bachmid at the end of regulation and then preserving his heroics by knocking in four of his 15 points in the extra period.

But it was Custodio who took the lead in rallying the Warriors, hitting 11 of his 16 markers in the third period as rival after coming off a scoreless first half where he watched his team mad, 14-33, and lose a lot of the swagger and confidence it showed in an opening day win against the Salesians Fabians.

In the extra period, Barbosa and Custodio keyed an 8-0 burst to get the Warriors on top for good, 87-79, with only 2:19 remaining.

Custodio pumped for eight of the Warriors' first 13 points in the third period to attach the deficit, 49-48, after trailing, 32-48, at halftime.

Taylor Tan (Warriors) dominated that tilt and the Warriors actually took the lead, 66-55, 35 seconds before the end of the third period.

But a spate of errors kept UE from finishing off FEU in regulation.

The Warriors had a late game spread going into the final minutes but the Tamaraws managed to knot the score with an Alfred Cerillo basket and a pair of free throws by Ronnie Magsanoc in the last 55 ticks that unsheltered a Custodio turnover.

Earlier, the Junior Blue Eagles doubled the Salesians Baby Falcons, 80-37, to take the solo 2-0 lead in juniors play.

The UP Junior Maroons occupied with a 79-74 decision over the UST Tiger Cubs to claim their first victory.

In the tilt, the UE Pages recovered from an opening day loss with a 97-73 triumph over the NU Bullpups.

Pacquiao-Morales III a struggle against irrelevance

COMMENTARY

Herman Rivera

MANNY "PACMAN" PACQUIAO AND Erik "El Terrible" Morales express their previous hostile meetings with a compelling post-and thriller remain to collect to a tense set of exciting figures.

November 28th is the date of the U.S. real installment of this stirring Pacquiao-Morales trilogy with the Thomas and Mack Center in Las Vegas picked once more as the fight site—a logical call' held where many the dazzling duels figured in a remarkable slugfest.

Manny and Erik split their first two duels but with the way the Mexican doubted the Kiwisaurus in their last session, and the money hosting he dealt Pacquiao, it is the slight favorite in this long-awaited rubber bout.

Pacquiao has been on a tear lately while Morales has been inactive since he lost hand the Carabao idol in a second "grim-and-take" classic that ended in a tenth round knockout of the Tijuana tactics.

The same sustained action will be offered by both warriors when they conclude their three-fight sets with Manny expected to meet early in order to appease a notoriously late-going EGB.

Remember how it was when Pacquiao cemented with his vigorous pounders in that January shocker? the irrepressible Manny repeat over a determined and focused Erik?

Luz Manip—being a devout practitioner of this manly art—more on-and-off thinking here.

Great fighters like Pacquiao are insidious ones they go for the kill. But can he out Morales into touching out for his left—only to one smack into a mind-boggling right, as what happened to Erik bloodily reminded?

You bet he will.

The final parting of arguably the best super-featherweights in the universe is an unusual many twelve-rounder which has all marks of a brutal but not unexciting unresolved rate in a back alley.

The winner gets to be richer—for of course. Needless to say the loser slips into irrelevance.

Enriquez shines in Vietnam shootfest

HANOI, VIETNAM—SEEING ACTION FOR the first time, Enrique Lourdes Enriquez captured bronze of Asian against other opponents to bag the bronze medal in the 50th Southeast Asia Shooting Championship held July 2 to 9 in Hanoi, Vietnam.

The 14-year-old Enriquez, a student of Ormik School Manila, tallied an impressive 1132 125 plus 7-10 in the Olympic trap event despite the scorching heat and humidity.

Enriquez, the youngest competitor, had scored shooting throughout the two-day elimination rounds and was in fact the sixleader with a 116 going into the final round.

But the lack of international exposure caught up with Enriquez in the finals as he bowed to the more experienced Thailand and Vietnam shooters who marched gallant alone, respectively.

Enriquez then combined with Clifford Lubricon and Andrew to win another bronze medal in the shoot-team event.

Meanwhile, lady shooter Lyra Garcia, who recently qualified for the 2004 Olympics Games, bagged the silver medal in the ladies individual Olympic trap event with a 57-75-119 in the single-barrelled round.

The trio of Philippine ladies trap team, Lyra Garcia, Gay Cortez and Asia Marie Gana team

FIRING QUIET: Lourdes Enriquez relaxes before the finals

RODRIGUEZ

LEGASPI

ARDINA

RP jungolf regains world's respect with 3-gold output

By Joey Arsiaro

SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA—HE SUCH THEthe age, the three Filipino kids who crowned themselves champions of the just-concluded Callaway Junior World competitions here have made big excellence to justify the creation of excellency.

Leaving school is foremost.

While Cyrus Rodriguez and Allie Legaspi are now on home study, Dottie Ardina have hardly read her books this year, owing to the long hours of training for their tournaments in the United States.

Legaspi, winner of the Class E (7-9 years) division, stood for amazing her audience, carrying the usually heavy backpacks or taking the early morning ride on the school bus with classmates of all.

She does the school stuff nowhere but home, and has to wrestle the golf course for big school.

The whole of last summer, Allie's family stayed in a rented house inside the Riviera Golf and Country Club in Viking, Cerritz, with her father Bernardo devising a military-style training program for Allie and sister Mia on their makeshift lot of room and time for golf, golf and nothing but golf.

"We talked about it and since we all wanted something to happen with their games, we became their summer coaches," said the elder Legaspi, who capped his military career by serving as chief of staff to former president Fidel Damasco.

It took just a few months of serious golf for someone as young like Mia, with her dad and coach Bally Baltazar, to bring home her first major trophy and a Junior World repeat trophy on hand.

Already an extremely talented golfer, Archie's exposure to several high-caliber stars around Southeast Asia as a member of the RC-153 pool where he gets guidance from swing guru Bong Lopez boosted her think no end.

Archie and Rodriguez had to spend summer living in a home away from home.

They were separated 24/7 and for six days a week with regular rounds at the Country Club with the rest of the training pool.

For Archie and Rodriguez to be kept away from their doting parents, much more being denied of their well-fetch or the cruel or disruptive sons a bittersweet experience.

But the end result was, they were got better as golfers. Archie pitched up a second Junior World crown in five years and Rodriguez also has five silver three wins.

The triple triumph by the three Filipino girls as a world-wide competition not only was check booster at the San Diego courses but brings to focus warm the program of the Junior Golf Foundation of the Philippines which has survived the test of time.

"It's really an indication that the simple assistance we make out of the sponsorships we're given produces big results like world titles," said Jeremiah Jhon Arcadio Mendiello.

Mendiello was aware when she heard of the big news on Thursday morning, saying her prayers for RP jungolf to experience another big pair of multiple titles "was finally heard."

So, Philippine Jungolf has regained its respect in the world scene, thanks to three girls of spirit.

Sister Bobbie de Villa tied for 26th in the girls' Class A were by Japanese Mika Miyazato with a 73-81) while Trainee Antolin (76-86) shared 46th in boys play where Matthew Glen of Australia won by eight strokes. The Philippines had the second most wins with three, one behind the United States which had four.

Bacolod hosting ASEAN football

THE PHILIPPINES WILL TRY TO target into the 2007 ASEAN Football Championship when it hosts a qualifying round in Bacolod City from Nov. 13-20.

The Filipinos will be competing against squads from Laos, Cambodia, Brunei and Timor Leste for the two slots still available for the sixth edition of the biennial event, formerly known as the Tiger Cup, at the Panaad and Paglaum Stadiums.

Already qualified for the tournament proper are three-time champion Thailand, two-time winner Singapore, Indonesia, Myanmar, Malaysia and Vietnam.

The qualifier is a joint outstanding of the Philippine Football Federation headed by Atleta Bumaldez and the Negros Occidental Football Association led by its president Representative Charlie Cojuangco.

It will be a tough mission for the Filipinos, ranked 192 by the International Football Federation (Fifa), as they will be up against the highly-ranked Laotians (182), Cambodians (193), Bruneians (170) and the unranked Timorenses, an associate member of the Fifa.

The Philippines battles Laos in the Nov. 12 opening match, meets Timor Leste on Nov. 14, tackles Cambodia on Nov. 18 and faces Brunei on Nov. 20.

The Philippines has won only once in all its outings in the Tiger Cup. That distinction goes to current assistant coach Ariz Cadlli, who steered the Nationals to a come-from-behind 2-1 victory over Timor Leste in the 2004 edition held in Malaysia.

Other coaches who handled the Philippines were Noel Caroline (first Serb in 1996, Juan Cunillera in 1998 and 2000 and Sugoo Rambo in 2002).

The point system will determine the two qualifiers for the championships round to be held either in Thailand or Singapore in January.

Fil-Am could turn out to be PBA draft's steal

A 27-YEAR-OLD 6'5, 400 COULD sway until for the sleepers of this year's PBA rookie draft, if his high school records are to be used as basis.

Player agent Charlie Dy said Alexander Davis, a 5-foot-11 playmaker who has the deadline for the Aug. 20 draft in Market! Market! should end up the surprise of the draft.

"He's supposed to be good but we have to see him pro in rookie camp," said Dy.

The reason for his optimism lies in the high school records furnished by the player.

Dy said the documents show that Davis resided at Tappan Zee High School in New York, where he reportedly still holds school records for steals, assists and 3-pointers. He was named all-league, all-county and all-state.

Davis attended Uniondale College where he was included in the honorable mention all-freshmen team. He played early this year in Norway where he led his team in scoring, assists, steals and won the Norwegian all-star game MVP.

"He really dreams of playing in the PBA," said Dy, who revealed that Davis has another special reason for applying for the draft.

"He wants to eventually meet his sister, whom he has never seen since she left him when she died." Dy revealed. Davis was born in Zambales but was adopted when he was 6 years old by his paternal aunt, who is married to an American.

SPORTSWATCH

Fistorama features Tejares-Vicera bout

ECSTASIES features this afternoon's four-round amateurboxing action from Symington Foster Tejares and Brian Vicera. It is supported by a 6-round amateur bouts featuring Rolando Navarrete and Marcus Nieves. The fights were held recently at the Icelandic Gymnasium in Pasong, Silay. Tejares is known more recently through MID-LINK Global's The Filipino Diamond Pinoy Central 10. The event will be aired on RPN-9 starting at 2:05 p.m. Both Nieves Plus, featuring the elimination match between College of Saint Benilde's Trend Pinoli (20 College Team) 4-6 in The PESERS Women Inter-Collegiate Beach Volleyball Challenge are at 3 p.m.

Derby champs join SJC Rambulan

BASKAND breeders Conor Marquez, Eric Zamoranos and Jo Dan Lucio of Laguna signed up yesterday for the PTI SM Rambulan Sa San Juan 5-race derby slated at San Juan Coliseum on July 17, 19, 21, 24, 26 and 28. The three members of the United Backyard Breeders Association (UBBA) bagged the championship of "Batanan Sa Sagi San 8 race derby" last Tuesday using the entry named SSS. Accordingly to Rosario Lacuna, one of the promoters, more than 300 entries will participate in the 8-day race meeting. A guaranteed prize of P2m will be given to the jockey-owner of a winning horse. Jockey Jo Dan Lucio, who is also a member of UBBA, is the defending champion of Monday's opening round event scored their winning entry from 2y.o. to 4y.o. and was clad P25-000-3, 125-0,000 and 1991-804'001 (Exacta).

PIM at stake in Religon cockfest

MBCH-Kill Intolerable coalfest, the Motorcycle Fashion 4-cock derby, unfolds at Religon Bingo Cockpit on Aug. 1, Sunday with P1 million in guaranteed prize. Driven by the P5,000 Double Elimination Drag-bet, and "Thunderbird Eliminator, the event will be hosted under by Rally Lopez. The fastest win champions during this event will be awarded P100,000 cash. 1 and 2 with get one brand new Honda 1 Grader XR while the runner fastest win champion will get a Honda 450M Sud Sports. For details, call 911-1212, 800-4000 and 800-9812. Meanwhile, partners Abraham Bernabe, Tiling Capillan and Mario Gabriel will host a 3-cock derby with P350,000 guaranteed for an entry fee of P5,000.

RP'S Valerio shares 29th place

RUPAK's Abel Jober Valerio defeated host Ital Al Ibrahim in the ninth and final round for finish in a tie for 29th in 424 players in the event of 9th Dubai Masters Chess Championship 2006 hosted by Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashidan Cup at The Dubai Chess & Culture Club in United Arab Emirates. Valerio needs 5.5 points to become, one three and four times and landed at 26th slaces after the tie-break points was applied. However, younger sisters Anna Jasmin and Clarissa Jan finished behind NPM Mahdalin Imam and Mr Abdullah Dawood, also from UAE, respectively. Valerio got rated at 2,427 points for 18th place over the Chinese Jun-er trained at 2,3 points for 11th place. IM Vaja Gelaki of Azerbaijan stopped one while as leader Khushbul Callum of England in the final round to score 8.0 points and take the title. Tata Master Ramaswami Srikanth of India finished second with 7.5 points.

AM Alamar Samaniego

BADMINTON TILT: The 2006 Sportsforever-Dunlop Corporate and Celebrity Cup invitational badminton championships will be held July 17-23 at Club 600 Libis and SM Megamall. The tournament is organized by Olympian Weena Lim. (From left) Chancor Cordero, Hazel Santiago, Randy Santiago, Cecile Reyes, Lim, Gov. Edgardo Aglipay, Marley Dy and Mario Chua during the formal launching of the event at Dencio's at Metrowalk in Pasig.

Bautista: Knight in shining armor

BAUTISTA: Go-to-guy

BOBBY BAUTISTA HAS PROVEN HOW good he is, helping Letran win two championships in the past three years.

But this time, as the Knights gun for back-to-back titles, the pressure is even bigger for the 5-foot-7 playmaker in the 82nd National Collegiate Athletic Association men's basketball tournament.

With the departure of six veterans from last year's champion team, Bautista is teaming up this time with a group of reserves and rookies. So far, he's been tremendous, producing numbers expected of him while directing the Knight's offense with authority.

Letran have won its first four games, the last over PCU, which it downed in the 2005 Finals (2-1).

Bautista torched the Dolphins with 20 points, including four pressure-packed free throws that kept PCU at bay.16 to take their 7 of-13 triples.

His impressive showing earned him NCAA Press Corps Player of the Week honors.

"Hey presents ito talaga, hindi naman nagsasawalay 'yan eh, patuloy naman 'yan, dinidiyan lang padagdag konti sa game," said Bautista, who helped his alma mater win NCAA championships in 2003 and 2005, where he was named Finals MVP.

Except for Sonny Alvarez, who, like Bautista is in his final season and has played crucial role in the two championships, the other Knights are either bench warmers a year ago or newcomers.

However, Letran mentor Louie Alas is confident on the leadership capabilities of his coveted guard, who is averaging 13.0 points, 5.5 rebounds and three assists in four games.

"Mindi ito kakubuhan sa coach time kasi alam mo na mas'yan si Bobby," said Alas. "Sa can create situation for himself, as well as for his teammates. He's the kind of player who teaches his teammates how good."

From killer crossovers, dazzling between-the-legs moves, softly passes, dreadful drives to the basket, no long range bombs, he can do it all. So when Bautista plays, don't blink, it might be for the highlight reels.

Rodriguez tops Kart-Trak meet

RODRIGUEZ

PACO RODRIGUEZ OF Team CEC romped the opposition in the Junior Kids category of the 20x8 Inspiration Racing Series title by lord last weekend at the Bonny-land Kart Trak in Bonny City.

Unopposed by intrepid race driver during the time trial and qualifying race, which were held on a 1.2 kilometer circuit, Rodriguez had his composure and cleared his way up the field to finish first.

Rodriguez was named a P5,000 fine and a three-second penalty for accidentally colliding with Joel Bonifacio who was started the same fine. Despite the time penalty, Rodriguez managed to coast racing to a 7-second gap that he had at the checkered flag and retain his first position of 50.1 seconds.

During the final, Rodriguez exhibited smooth moves and precision on pass the overtaking sets over a field composed of eventual second placer John Tordilla, third placer Dominic Baby Dimitri and John Alvarez.

Rodriguez, supported by Auto Pensionesan, Super Shuttle Ferry, Globe Telecom, JOMER Inc. dba and JTE, Gaming store, will see action in the next leg of the series on Aug. 12 and 13 at the Indonesia Kingdom.

Special Edition eyes Horseman's Cup

By Marissa B. Castillo

SPECIAL EDITION, A FILLY SIRED BY PUTRA Cup-winning sire Rajsaham, will try to win her second straight Triple Crown leg when the 32nd installment of the 2000 series—the Horseman's Cup—is flagged off at the Santa Ana Park in Makati City today.

Six other champion-sired colts in the 2,000-meter, P2 million event, including the four-legged Don Ezequiel, the first leg winner, who is itching for some payback.

Special Edition will be seen off as the overwhelming first choice considering how she thundered back from the end of the pack last month to win the 3U Diggin Cup on the same track.

It exhibited her resurgence as the best in the land, and the rest of the field better think of ways to hold her back at 1:25 p.m.

Dominador Borbe partners Special Edition again, while Antonio Ricardo handles Don Ezequiel, the handsome colt coming from the overpowering stables of Herman Figueroa.

Art Surtida, under Jeff Zarate, has shown a lot of promise and could be another entry to contend with Like Batang Silyas, a seven-year-old who has not stopped campaigning its regular route to get its shape for the event.

Jonathan B. Hernandez wears Million Indian, the speed demon colt who set the pace in each of the first two legs only to finish out of the money each time.

Dinalo The Younger, once touted as a bright Triple Crown hope, and Mr. Victory round out the compact seven-horse field.

Several horsemen, meanwhile, expressed disappointment at how the information campaign for the Hopeful Stakes, to be run later on around 7 p.m. was handled.

Daily Four Horse Racing, fed by Triple Crown veteran Tigers in Action, will be dogging it out for the P500,000 top prize with the big stables interests of Reynaldo M. Raquel Jr. handles Tigers in Action, a 3-year-old bay filly, who will not off as the slight pick against the likes of Hungry Pinoy, Lucky Joe and Manhattan in the 1,600-meter race.

Don Ezequiel was the Horseman's Cup—the first leg—last May at the San Lazaro Leisure Park by holding off a charging seventy-five included Special Edition.

Handled beautifully by Borbe and with Don Ezequiel not getting to run a pace to his liking, Special Edition found the pacemaker's rasp pickings in the second leg.

Irish rules AF3 races, challenges Sy for lead

ALI JACKSON of Ireland overtakes James Winslow of Great Britain in lap 8 of Race 7.

By acquired focused 6-from day jet bar four faded in put on the broken early enough coming out of a turn in lap 2 and showed into the grass. After trying vainly to start his engine, he walked back to the pit in disgust.

The steady drizzle continued into Round 3 but it does not deter Jackson and Winslow at the start and he was bumped but behind by fellow Filipino Roland Hermann going into the first turn, yanking him out of the traction good.

"We were able to fix the battery problem but encountered a new problem with the clutch at the start. Despite a bad start, Jackson is there but he was far from behind by Roland who seemed his breaking," explained Team Goddard principal Mark Goddard. "We just have to hard luck with rod issues now," Goddard added, referring to Round 6 and 9 breaking.

It continued to struggle with his rebuilt Delara 304, and like Switzerland to finish in fourth 6, being forced into the ground to lap right after a little by to pass Rupert Bernstein of Indonesia. The Ignacio's Asia lead down have finished fifth in the next round, coming after he out from his engine and earning eight precious points, just enough to keep him ahead in the overall standings.

Despite his misfortune, Bernstein earned 10 points for 4th overall but relinquished second overall to the surging Jackson. Winslow amassed 20 points and moved up from fifth to fourth with 73, leaving Beni, previously tied with Jackson for third, to little with 52 points.

"We were able to fix the battery issue," said he "We have to double a triple of it up the last race (in Batangas). We will early pinpoint the problem with my car. I was off pace."

Only seven out of 13 starters finished Round 7, and 10 survived the earlier race. Jackson is leaning in the lead, the European gamely negotiated every turn and curve at the 4.3-kilometer track while the rest either spun out or hit the guard after speeding through wet portions of the track.

Bata, Django don RP colors in World Cup

FILIPINO CUE MASTERS STEVEN "Bata" Stevens and Francisco "Django" Bustamante will carry the Philippine colors in the inaugural of thenyblake.com World Cup of Pool on Aug. 22 to 27 at the The Newport Center, Newport, South Florida.

News and Statements, protégé of operations patrons Jolens "Nardi" Dyan and Billiards and Snooker Congress of the Philippines president Ernesto "Ernie" Pajarillo, are also scheduled to play in the 2000 series six-man exhibition leg starting today in Guangzhou, China.

They will also spearhead the strong 13-man Philippine contingent in the 8-Ball/Nine 2000 International Pool Tour grand finale on July 23-30 at the Venetian Hotel in Las Vegas, Nevada.

"It's a great honor for Ayco and Budweiser to be invited to represent the Philippines in the World Cup of Pool," said Pajar. "I hope that they will do well in this event and we will continue to support them."

A total of 32 countries, each represented by two players, will be vying part. The team best will be placed on a straight knockout basis five rounds of matches or one 19 table. All matches are scored 8-ounce with alternate breaks.

At stake is a total pot prize of $250,000, with the champion receiving $60,000. The runners-up get $30,000 and the losing semifinalists will take home $14,000 each.

The race-to-9 format will be used in the last 32, last 16 and last 8 while the race-to-11 format will be adopted from semifinal round. The finals will be race-to-13 affair.

Europe will be parading 16 countries, including Croatia, Czech Republic, England A, England B, Holland, Germany, Holland, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Malta, Russia, Switzerland, Spain, Sweden and Wales.

The Philippines will be leading the charge of 10 Asian nations that also include India, Indonesia, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Singapore, Taiwan, Thailand and Vietnam.

The United States and Canada will represent the Americas while the Oceania of the World is composed of Australia, New Zealand, South Africa and United Arab Emirates.

Marlon Bernardino

REYES

BUSTAMANTE

Europe cuts Asia edge

Front page 423

DAL Evans and Donna Kellogg play in harmony against their Asian foes.

climbing in the rankings.

"I was more relaxed that I was really not sure where," Jonasson added, knowing the index to be less than 1.98 percent. "But every time I stand on the court, I always fancy that I will win."

It was the first victory by Asians in the current matches against Hidayat, and it proved a big one for Europe, which got another two points from Emma Kellogg after losing short work of the Sarwidi-Thongboonkaew tandem. Chanbenchaipaseuy team later.

The Euro pair notched fourth in the world jumped out hard and was never threatened in a 21-8, 21-15 victory as Emma and Kellogg, becoming the challenge to the referee, played to the Asiaone Coliseum crowd every.

Hong Kong (China)'s Wing Chee put up another two points for the host when she trapped the Netherlands' Mia Audina Tjiptawan, 15-21, 21-14, 21-15, for 1-1 (3-win).

Asia, looking to win this Ryder Cup-style event for the second straight year, lost many 1st three matches in the first day with Chenwe sees Liu Jun and Zhang Ning posting outstanding wins against separate foes.

But it proved to be Asia's last hurrah for the day as Jonasson chipped it out touch-and-nail with Hidayat before shutting the door down when it really was served.

The 32-year-old Jonasson, carving out more points from 6-4 in the first set, moving on a wide array of shots and outwitting on crucial Hidayat mistakes to score 6-4 14-4 lead.

Hidayat, who won the Olympic gold as an unranked player in Athens, Greece, couldn't find his range in the third set, netting seven wide and wide long while being caught looking at several Jonasson winners that clipped the baseline.

But the crowd-darling that he is, Hidayat worked the big stadium into a frenzy when he won seven of the next nine points from 6, 14 down for 11-20, before a Jonasson backhand winner found to put the points to bed for his team's four-two points in the three-day meet.

"This is hard time adjusting because it was a bit windy in my side for the court," said the 29 years old. Playing through an injury prone. "I also had little time to train for the event."

Audrian Tjiptawan appeared to be the one to beat Europe to first win after that easy first set romp, but Wong got her game going – charging in the next and scoring easy points.

With the scores ending that turn, the match favoring Fil Ipinos Bunon and Kusnaen Anendon could prove key to the event, where the winning combo wins products.

The Asian trio Tseole Thomas Layboers and Rastella Paine Jaki in the mixed doubles event that opens third day action today and the Filipinos, ranked 20th in the world, are given an equal chance to post an upset.

Each victory today will be worth three points with the five continent to score 10 points going home with the cup and the prize money.

Hidayat's perfect tunnel against Jonasson last night could have set an inch the decisive making tone for the Asian captain to refuse to falter in the men's singles.

Liu was next posturing to open the dropping the Dane set against Rollins on Friday and Jonasson is looking for a win to bring topped by the Euro ship pet to play the Chinese ranked second in the world.

The event is being presented by SMART Communications and Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. and sponsored by PCC, ABC 3, Philex, Solaflex, Indonesian Tourism, the Philippine Daily Inquirer, Ivy's Tower, Bumbee, Philippines Star, Runaway Series, Cellfon, the PBA Kitchen and Gatorade.

Paragua, Torre join Cordillera chessfest

GRANDMASTERS MARC Paragua and Rogelio Torre will lead the field in the 2000 Cordillera Open Chess Championships slated on Aug. 20-25 at the Baguio Golf and Country Club in Baguio City.

Paragua, the country's top-ranked player and the 48th in the world, and Torre, a former GM, are expected to battle it out for the 18th 2200-candidate Jaynee Gomez for it the P150,000 tournament sanctioned by the National Chess Federation of the Philippines.

The rare-rated Torre opens event will be limited by former Bangsa Governor and NCFP director Raul "Rocky" Mallillin to corporate-only NCFP class Queen-City representative Marian "Mac" Gutierrez and NCFP executive director Jaynee Samuel "Sammy" Gomez.

"I expect more rated players to join the tournament," said Gomez, who only needs one more GM norm to complete his GM status.

Also expected to vie with the top members of IP Team Jakarta ASEAN age groupers headed by 13-year-old Fide Master Jan Emmanuel Garcia of Sampaloc, Manila. The others are 14-year-old Samantha Elle Berina of Bacolor, Pampanga, Genevieve Rose of Candon City, Ilocos Sur, Brianne Mae Martinez of Lucap, Bacoor, and Charlene Chloe Gallardo of Cebu, 12.

PARAGUA

Union.

National Masters Rolando Nelle, Gary Villanueva and Joby John Mendoza of Baguio City also expected to participate.

The champion will receive P60,000 with the second, third, fourth and fifth placers producing P20,000, P15,000, P10,000 and P7,000, respectively. The ranks of seven players get P5,000, P4,000, P3,000, P2,000 and P1,000 in the order.

Category prizes will also be awarded to the top lady finisher, top junior, top senior, top lady and top unemployed.

For inquiries, contact tournament organizer Mallillin at 0915-9480280 or Bernice at 0915-9362551. Ali Marlon Bernardino

Respect is behind Mosley's rematch with Vargas

SHARE Mosley weighs in at 153 pounds. AP

LAS VEGAS—ALTHOUGH SHANE Mosley and Fernando Vargas stared menacingly into each other's eyes at the weigh-in, there was a mutual respect behind the usual boxing bravado.

And as long as Vargas has both of those eyes open in the fighters' rematch Saturday night, that could set another feel-good story in the career of Mosley's comeback 15th round victory in their first matchup five months ago.

While Vargas prowled and Mosley stalked through the pre-fight events, their 78 kilograms (154 pounds) seemingly morphing up as smooth, cooperative interviewees of two Southern California natives and longtime acquaintances.

Just don't expect any real theatrics outside the ring at the MGM Grand.

"There's a mutual respect between both of us, because we've been in the ring with each other, and we know what we have to do," Vargas said. "We don't have to say anything."

The rematch came together quickly because both fighters had established business from February—and their promoters quickly reorganized the appeal of another pay-per-view.

Vargas (24-3, 20 KOs) thought he was winning that first fight despite a grotesque swelling over his left eye. He was unharmed when it was stopped, and the relatively fighter-sized Mosley's head-butts were the only thing keeping him from victory.

Almost nobody else knows it that way. Mosley (32-1, 26 KOs) was leading on two judges' scorecards, and Vargas' swelling appeared to be caused by Sugar Shane's peppering right hand, not his head.

"We've got back and forth on it, but the tape shows that I was winning the fight," Mosley said.

With his reunited celebrities and sponsor, Mosley is a slight favorite in his first fight since re-hiring his father Jack Mosley. The younger Mosley essentially fired his father after Bronco Mosley's son Jan, but reunited with an apparent hard feelings and a renewed desire to maximize the talents they've mustered together since Shane was 8 years old.

"We are going to concentrate on hitting Vargas everywhere we can hit him," said Jack Mosley, who's also a physical therapist and a music producer. "If he moves out to his him in the open again, we'll hit him in the cooper again. If he blocks the eye, there will be someplace else to hit him." AP

REMAINDED Vargas dips the scales at 154 lbs.

Buenavista, Sealza top marathon favorites

THE COUNTRY'S FIRST LONG DISTANCE runners test their stuff today in what is expected to be a tightly-fought Metro Manila showdown legs of the 2006 National Milo Marathon.

Olympian Eduardo Buenavista, Peyroad clocks for boys, Regidor-bill and Donald Dojo are the men to watch in the men's division of the full marathon which will select the biggest contingent of qualifiers to the National Finals in December.

The dwarf title is a tossup between 2002 champion Christopher Sealza and Silkan Valentino.

The 42K race first off at 4:30 a.m. at the Edsa-Santolan corss point in front of the Jose Rizal memorial in front of Rizal Park, along Roxas Boulevard.

From there, runners will turn around at MAA Boulevard and for Edsa via C3 Expat bus. Their 5-turn turnaround point is at Heritage Hotel in Tagaig City after passing through the Southern Global City and IT, Bonifacio Army Camp. Runners return to the finish line using the same route.

Upon reaching the Gil Puyat-Roxas Blvd. intersection, runners will turn right towards the finish line at the Quirino Grandstand using the roadside median lane of Roxas Blvd.

Motorists are advised to use alternate routes or to create a counter-clockwise traveling to the vicinity of the race route Sunday morning.

All males who finish the 42K race in less than four hours and all females who finish within four and a half hours are qualified to compete in the 42K grand finals on Dec. 3.0.

The winners in the men's and women's race will each win P50,000 and a trophy. The 10K side event will be flagged off at 6 a.m., the 5K has run at 6:40 and the Kiddies 5K run at 6:50.

RP riders 3rd in Asian race

TEAM HAMSIA-PHILIPPINES WOUND UP third overall in the Tour of Thailand's 2006 Asian Bicycle race of Nations as the 2.5-kilometer Nakhon Ratchasima track at Sakhonchaiard in Nakhonpathom in Thailand recently.

Jaime Bautial, Mairo Bonito and Roderick Dino clocked the No. 2 spot for the Philippines during the qualifying time trials using Colombian Yamaha CG-pistol 25 underbone bikes provided by Honda Thailand.

Bautial was the most consistent Philippine rider in he finished 58th overall. Bonito, a 155 Entrepreneur freshman at University of Santo Tomas, landed seventeh while Dino finished 108th for Team Hamsia-Philippines.

"We're happy that our were able to deliver for the country," said they Allen of Mobile Females, who spoke for the Philippine team.

Ratnapong Wanlaya, manual Sanwarth and Jeremiah Chairmanne finished 1-2-3 to both races at host Thailand won the competition.

Suico goes for world title

Cebuano pride targets WBA lightweight crown

THEY CHRISTENED HIM as he with the "Fists of Steee."

Whether those fists would be enough to destroy a "Baby Bull" will be known today when Randy Suico tries to become the lone Filipino world champion by slugging it out against WBA lightweight king Juan Diaz in the MGM Grand Hotel and Casino.

Johnny Tecson may be the current sensation of local boxing—and the current flavor of the world—but Suico will be trying to pocket something the "Peruvian" doesn't currently hold—a world title.

Peregrino's international super bantamweight title it a token belt reserved for bosses not in the top 10 of their weight divisions.

And despite the odds stacked against the Cebu-based boxer, preparations are already being made for a red carpet welcome should he emerge victorious.

Apart from a victory parade, Mandaue City Mayor Thadeo Chuanco has already pledged a big cash incentive for the dynamite-fisted Asian should he successfully become a world champion today.

The Game Ole in Hoya promoted card, which will be aired simulcast over Solar Sports and ESPN-5 starting at 10 a.m. today, will serve as the chief support to the Diaz-Manny Pacquiao-Erik Morales rematch.

At yesterday's weigh-in, both Suico and Diaz came in at 135 lbs and both made the limit right at their first try.

Suico was given the nickname "Running Man," which in the Visayan dialect means "fast of nose," because of his penetrating power but not even that was easy to many sidewinders to install him the favorite in his bout against the champion, who goes by the nickname "Baby Bull."

As of yesterday, Diaz, who hails from Lancaster, was a 1,000-600 favorite, which means that an $800 bet for Diaz only yields a $100 return.

The 26-year-old Suico was listed as a plus-500 underdog, which means that a $100 dollar bet for Suico will win a staggering $500.

The underdog Diaz (29-0, 14 KOs) will be making the fourth defense of his world title against the heavy-handed Suico (24-2, 21 KOs), who will be serving notice in his first world title bout.

Pacquiao was originally scheduled to fly to Las Vegas to cheer for Suico but decided his presence after being rushed in the hospital on Friday due to a bout with gastroenteritis.

But Pacquiao's absence could realign the man-to-beat of the Filipinos.

Pacquiao, who is now resting at his home in Davao City, could be the favorite when two-other local world title hopefuls—Wilfredo Vazquez and Rodel Mayol—vied for the WBA and WBC 140 lb titles. Both came up short in their bid to annex the crowns.

Pacquiao's two associates—the "Siderite" Eubal and lawyer Jing Garcia—made the trip and will provide morale support to the Filipino fighter.

"Manny chose to stay behind but we are here to support Suico," Eubal said in an interview with this writer yesterday from Las Vegas. "Our manager, Joe Redmond of Japan, will also be present.

RANDY Suico (left) and Juan Diaz pose with boxing promoter and fighter Marco Antonio Barrera after their weigh-in.

'Scorching' duel seen between Alonso, Schumacher

MAGNY COURS, FRANCE—FORMULA One champion Fernando Alonso and seven-time champion Michael Schumacher duel again at this weekend's French Grand Prix.

Qualifying runs shows 35 degrees Celsius (95°F) on Friday—and more than 50°C (122°F) on the track—and it's expected to get even hotter for Sunday's race.

Schumacher placed sixth in practice on Friday.

"The situation looks pretty good," the German said afterward. "We are reasonably satisfied with what we have seen this afternoon."

Alonso also appeared relaxed, calling the day "a normal Friday."

Schumacher ended Alonso's four-race winning streak with a 1-2 Ferrari finish at the United States GP on July 2. It was his third win in 19 races this year and the 87th of his career.

Schumacher's win—at Indianapolis was his lowest finish of the season and the first time he has been off the podium since finishing 11th at the Hungarian GP in July 2005.

Still, the Spaniard has a comfortable 46-69 lead over Schumacher in the championship standings.

Six of the other seven 2006 races have been won by Alonso, with fellow Renault driver Giancarlo Fisichella winning the seventh.

Alonso's one second in afternoon practice to Lauber's Federal Robbins, who also led the first session. Fifth-placed Fisichella came in ahead of Schumacher on sixth.

McLaren-Mercedes has a new driver for the race with Pedro de la Rosa of Spain replacing Juan Pablo Montoya for Sunday's race. McLaren cut the Colombian from the team after he announced he would be heading to NASCAR next season.

However Ron Dennis, head of the McLaren team, said there was a possibility of Montoya resuming duties next season. "Juan Pablo is contracted through to the end of the year," Dennis said. "And if we go chosen...he will test and race again."

"He still is committed to an option there is some other commercial arrangement between ourselves and the NASCAR team or Juan himself."

De la Rosa ended up 22nd in the afternoon practice. Montoya was actually among the top 10.

Wild Suzuki Finishing Party. THE SUZUKI half of the Formula Two season kicks off with the French Grand Prix at the Circuit de Nevers Magny-Cours. Back on home turf, the Wild Suzuki Swift 17 team is determined to dominate the weekend as it looks for any to the constructors' race with 68 points. Suzuki posted 50 and drivers' race with the French GP at the Wild Suzuki Pro Cup crossing party of 7 p.m. Sunday at the Swifts Bar in Mabuhay, Ortigas Center, Mandaluyong City. There will be three contests for racing drivers/fans, with original team merchandise to be given away as prizes.

ALL IN A DAY'S WORK
Against a westerm-like backdrop of conservation crosses, Dave Roberts of the San Diego Padres works on deck to last against the Atlanta Braves.

Team First-Ingen tops Enduro tilt

HARD WORK AND STRATEGIC PLANning worked wonders for Team First-Ingen Sports Wildman Sandals as it raked the Elite category of the Manila leg of the 2006 Enduro fun Mtg Light Adventure Series recently.

Powered by JT Gonzales, Ivy Lou Mendoza and Sheila Tagaro, Team First-Ingen finished the race in 2h 8mins and 16 minutes, by for the fastest time posted by a team in a 24-hour Enduro Sdd. race in four years.

"Hindi na bale kung natalo (We hardly expect," said Pitoyo, who emerged female champion in the Elite category. "Ang mag-out na kami nang strategy for the end day para may final start ay kami at ibang team. (We mapped out our strategy for the next day to gain a head start on other teams)."

Team First-Ingen Sports Wildman Sandals won the top prize of P75,000, along with Sea Mtg light premium items and a trophy.

Capping second place was Sea-AM-O Gaglow, composed of James Tagaro, Roy Adora and Christine Asuncio. Tagaro's role clocked 21 hours and 21 minutes and took home P50,000, SMS premium items and a trophy.

Team Nova Carenal led by Irma Changhian wound up third after covering the finish line 20 minutes later than AMO Gaglow. Rascal del Rosario and Miguel Lopez completed Nova Carenal's threesome.

The race was powered by Sea Mtg Light and supported by Hidapat, Converse, HS Royal Resource, Body Project, Hitech Fire and Action Sport.

Pitoyo said the race was not only a contest of speed as it also tested their mental alertness and physical abilities.

Race director Neyney Guevarra and Leo Gracilot, the Bell Filipino to reach the summit of Mount Everest, were more than happy with the outcome of the race.

"The success of the Enduro Sea Mtg Light Adventure Series was a direct indication that we are on target and be on par with foreign countries when it comes to outdoor racing," said Guevarra. "The series were fulfilled with the course and some racers were asking us when and where will the next Enduro race be."

Pitoyo said she and her teammates were already looking forward to next year's Enduro Sdd. Adventure Series.

A total of 28 teams took part in the Elite category that took the racers from the historic Diosmado Church in Pulilan, to the vicinity of the Green Meadow Mountains, to the La Mesa Dam and all the way to the suburban streets of Quezon City.

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
Sunday SPORTS
SUNDAY, JULY 16, 2006

Lance's team rediscovers form

Landis keeps yellow jersey

CARCASSONNE, FRANCE—IF LANCE ARMSTRONG DROPS IN on the Tour de France as expected next week, he'll have something to celebrate.

His Discovery Channel squad, struggling at its first Tour without the seven-time champion, had its first stage winner on Friday in young Ukrainian Yaroslav Popovych. Oh rider Floyd Landis kept the overallhead.

The non-retired Armstrong, a part owner of the Discovery squad, is expected at the race Tuesday or Wednesday, said team spokesman PJ Rubino. Given the struggles they've faced, his countrymates could probably do with his advice and help.

Discovery came to the Tour with several riders touted as possible contenders to pick up where Armstrong left off. George Hincapie, who rode with the Texan to all seven of his wins, got the team off to a quick start by placing second in the opening short time trial and by taking the overall race lead the next day.

But it was all downhill from there. Discovery finished third in the team time trial, Hincapie's podium aspirations had dashed when Hincapie and other Discovery riders crashed on the heather-lined in the Pyrenees on Thursday.

What a difference a day makes.

Popovych's stylish solo Friday—he rode alone to the finish in the medieval walled city of Carcassonne—could not have come at a better time, especially since Discovery had just lost two riders who dropped out of the Tour with injuries earlier in the day.

Kanstantsyn Sivtsov suffered concussions and internal injuries, including stomach pains, nausea, dizziness and breathing problems which worsened as the wound worsened." Who's agent, Jean Bertin, said in a statement.

"She was treated at the emergency room of the Gynecie Medical Center and will soon be released. Michelle was diagnosed with bone exhaustion and is now resting and in very good spirits."

Wie walked off the ninth hole on her own, but after talking with her parents said she couldn't play anymore. She drew non riders to the course's medical trailer, where she was treated for about 30 minutes.

Under local laws, Wie had to be taken to a hospital for further examination, her mother, Bo, accompanied the teenager to the ambulance and her father, BJ, followed behind in a car.

"She's fine. She's getting better," BJ Wie said when he came out of the course medical trailer. AP

UKRAINE'S Yaroslav Popovych (Discovery Channel/USA) celebrates as he crosses the finish line. AFP

Heat dries up Wie

SILVIS, ILLINOIS—MICHELLE WIE was taken to a hospital after withdrawing from the John Deere Classic with nine holes left Friday overcome by the conditions on a hot, humid afternoon, and left the course in an ambulance, prompting fears for her health.

"She suffered a number of different symptoms, including stomach pains, nausea, dizziness and breathing problems which worsened as the wound worsened," Wie's agent, Jean Bertin, said in a statement.

"She was treated at the emergency room of the Gynecie Medical Center and will soon be released. Michelle was diagnosed with bone exhaustion and is now resting and in very good spirits."

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"She's fine. She's getting better," BJ Wie said when he came out of the course medical trailer. AP

Fall and rise of Zidane fascinates whole world

PARIS—THE FIRST TALE OF ZIDANE I (date) vanished in an instant of visceral rage at the World Cup final. But what followed has proved strangely more compelling—more human, more profound, more universal.

His now-legendary head-butt—sending to opposed (with—butchered) shoots around the world, conquered with was sworn for global headlines, and obsessed philosophers and sports fans alike.

Could a top shrewd "David" into so unlikely have—unimportant and flawed, with an old-fashioned murder mentality that has both captivated and appalled millions in the new millennium.

"Above all, I'm human," he said on French television Wednesday night, after three long days of silence following the brutal career that marked the end of his stellar, 10-year career.

The surreal zenith started Sunday night, in the 110th minute of a riveting World Cup final, with France and Italy tied 1-1 in overtime. Italian defender Marco Materazzi grabbed Zidane's jersey as a French attack on goal ground heartlessly by. The man exchanged words. Seconds later, Zidane spun, lowered his head and rammed Materazzi's chest, knocking him to the ground.

The next few days were a frenzy of speculation, condemnation and excitement. What, people around the world asked, made Zidane crack? The head-butt overshadowed the results of the Cup—Italy won 5-3 in a penalty shootout—and threatened to ruin soccer's biggest spectacle.

Suicide of a shrewd goal

Even before Zidane spoke out, the iconic French philosopher Bernard-Henri Levy wrote in the the French press of the "suicide" of a "shrewd goal," calling Zidane a "super-hubbard" who was humiliated by a head-butt instead of a vulnerable head.

Many questioned how a player such as Materazzi—widely known as a ruffian on the field—could have interfere with the workings of a genius.

In a blow Republic commentary entitled "Zidane's Pitiless Headbutt," Italo Bertagnoni unflappedly observed that the Italian "had the temerity to speak nearly in Zidane—who dares speak to Debussy as he composes, to Victor Hugo as he writes, to Stifle Wie as she sings, to Shiraz as he paints?"

And the incident immediately became the stuff of pop culture legend—generating Internet jokes, an online game where users mow down a field of Materazzis, and three, pseudo psychiatric about head-butting.

On Wednesday, when the fallen man spoke out at last—in succinct interviews on French television—he wore an ultra-green military-style jacket draped over his shoulders—seeing around the world seemed to be looking for any excuse to forgive.

"I apologize, to all the children" who watched the match, he said—but he didn't repent, saying Materazzi had insulted his mother and sister—an unbearable affront Europe followed his head.

GAME 44

Rankin, Kim take 'wet' Jamie Farr lead

SYDNEY, (REU)—BULLET BARRY LEE A row set of clubs to shoot a 3-under 68 on Friday and grab a share of the lead with Kim Myung-soo in the Jamie Farr Owens Corning Classic before heavy rain forced the suspension of second-round play.

Kim shot 66 and was at 9-under 134 in the clubhouse, while Natalie Gulbis was 6-under through nine holes before play was stopped.

In 31 Pak attempting to match Mickey Wright's tour record of five victories in one season, and Aniuka Sorenstam were both 4-under through 11 holes.

Nearly all the holes were swamped and some were without partially underwater at the height of the storm. A rushing river flowed downhill through the fairway on No. 9.

The course at Highland Meadows Golf Club already was water-logged from three inches of rain that fell Wednesday.

Seventy-two players were on the course when the rain started.

Suing Mi Hie was 7-under through nine holes. Beda Creamer and Pat Hurst were 5-under. Lindsey Wenstam both were on the course at 4-under.

Gulbis was on a roll on the front nine, making birdies on four of the first five holes. AP

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Italian soccer crashes hard after hitting World Cup high

ROME—AFTER THE HIGH OF WORLD CUP victory, Italian soccer has fallen hard—with four top clubs, including powerhouse Juventus, and top officials and referees sanctioned for match-fixing.

An Italian sports tribunal demoted Juventus to the second division for the first time in its history and stripped it of its last two Serie A titles on Friday.

Lazio and Fiorentina also were demoted to the Serie B, while AC Milan was ignored relegation but penalized 15 points and will not compete in Europe this season.

Of the 26 officials or referees accused in the scandal, 19 received sentences ranging from the maximum five-year ban to a warning. Five were acquitted, and two were banned for life without possibility because they resigned before being charged.

The sentences—handed down five days after Italy won its fourth World Cup title—came be appealed within five days to a higher sports court.

Hundreds of fans for Lazio, the capital's other team along with AS Roma, gathered outside a Rome hotel where judges read the verdicts in Italy's biggest sports trial, defending their clubs' honor.

"It's a scandal that we were sent to same division as Arse," said Massimiliano Rizzi, a 29-year-old fan. "Lazio are innocent."

Raniero Cantalamessa, president of Lazio, resigned after the verdict.

Raniero Cantalamessa, president of Lazio, resigned after the verdict.

Raniero Cantalamessa, president of Lazio, resigned after the verdict.

ENTERTAINMENT

Edna Emerie G. Velarde

'Idol' judges exceed talent quota in Cebu

By Marinel R. Cruz
Photos by Rudy Esparza

CEBU CITY—"OUR SIX percutors were met, although I know there are so many good singers here who didn't audition. They are afraid to risk their jobs," declared "Philippine Idol" judge Pilita Corrales on the turnout of the major auditions here for the reality talent search on ABC 5.

The two-day tryouts held at the state-of-the-art Big Four Entertainment compound yielded 26 successors, a total of 69 had made it to the initial screening held on July 6.

"You will see these people in bars, clubs and hotel lounges here," said Corrales, who shares judging chores task with composer Ryan Cayabyab and singer TV host Francis Magalona. "They are afraid to leave their bands or jobs because they are sources of their finances in the contest. I'm proud of those who made it here."

More positive

Only 23 contestants each from the Visayas and Mindanao regions were supposed to get the coveted Golden Tickets that would only 17 were picked from the major auditions in Davao last month, the judges were allowed to give out 23 here.

"We've exceeded our quota again," Cayabyab said because Encarnacion, Jacot, "I feel more positive about Cebu [than Davao]. Mirroring regions' big

Cayabyab said Corrales were very vocal about their disagreement over the few favors (votes)—only 17 were picked out of 75 who auditioned.

"I'm truly excited about the second level auditions in Manila," said Cayabyab. "You see, ambitious (That will be the next judging)."

The 26 contestants will compete in the theater auditions set Aug. 1-3 at the CCP Main Theater in Pasay City.

Cayabyab said the judges found a lot of "really remarkable" contestants here but the question is whether or not they can compete with the others on the next level."

Cayabyab cited contestants Kenneth Basil Alonzo, 21, who "looked and sounded very female" during the auditions. "He has a good singing

HAPPY JUDGES. From left, Francis M., Ryan Cayabyab and Pilita Corrales "feel good" about Cebu turnout.

DID YOU KNOW...

'Bakekang' with Ch 7

GMA 7 HAS AC-quired the rights to "Bakekang," a popular komedia novel by Carlo J. Caparas.

Where Gil-connie, senior vice president for Entertainment TV says "Bakekang," made into a movie starring Nora Aunor in the '70s, will be the network's new prime drama soap series.

She told Caparas will act as creative consultant.

No start date been set for the title, or tapped to direct. Alan Valdez

Claudine: I miss Gretchen

By Reuyni San Diego Jr.

AT THE MEDIA GATHERING FOR STAR CINEMA'S forthcoming horror flick "Sukob," lead star Claudine Barretto's handlers advised reporters to steer clear of controversial subjects. Still, the question had to be asked: Did she miss her estranged sister Gretchen?

Claudine's answer was quick. "Yes, yes, (I miss her). I don't look for her ... because I see her on TV and she looks bigger (weight). But you know, when people mention her name, it makes me stop and think: Ay, nakakamiss."

Although as a child, her "idol" was sister Cla, Claudine acknowledged that she had been close to Gretchen as well.

"When I was growing up, Gretchen was very busy [with those hit work], but we [are friended, especially during that tragic time in my life," Claudine said, referring to the turbulent period in 2002, when former boyfriend Rico Yan died and Gretchen became her main defender from media assault.

Claudine insisted that she got over the loss. "It [feel's] long time ago."

So when will the Barretto sisters patch things up?

"Maybe ... it's not yet time," Claudine said. "It's difficult to talk about it very easily, something readily different might result but it's better for her to hear it straight from me. That's why I don't talk about it."

What she'd rather discuss is her three-month marriage to actor Raymart Santiago. She's still not used to her new name, she said. More than once, she did a double take when someone called her Mrs Santiago. "I wondered, who's that?"

Also, she has yet to sign official documents

CLAUDINE BARRETTO

JAMES Votes studies photography at Big Feet's film school.

FRED Adopts first joined "Yan Jan," a show that Magalona hosted.

HANEL So reminds Cayabyab of award-winning singer Diana.

GIAH Carla Magbanua, Jaime's cousin, was a member of the trio 11:26.

"Ber on 'to," says Mr. C of Robert Bernadas, from Toledo City.

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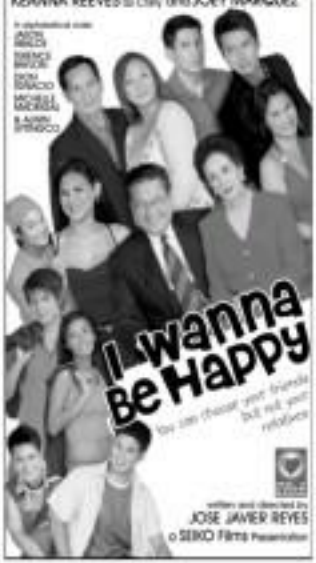

written and directed by
JOSE JAVIER REYES
a SEIKO Films Presentation

RP Idol

from page A4-1

voice. We were drawn to him. If he wins, the Philippines will be the first in the world to have an "Idol" like that."

Too good ...

Magalona singled out Moneve Kay Lim, a radiology technician, whom he found to be "too good to be true." "She has the face, the height, nice hair, a good smile and a great voice," said Magahona. "I was dumbfounded when I heard her. Manilyn (Reynes' nicknamed) jokingly said she didn't want to pick a contestant pretties than [herself]."

According to "Idol" host Ryan Agoncillo, male contestants who failed the auditions have taken the rejection far worse than the females did.

"One guy didn't want to speak at all," Ryan noted. "Nijaan stood by the door. I didn't know whether he was ashamed to face the camera or he was praying to Gregorian. I left him alone. You just have to respect that. The girls were more composed."

Weird moments

As expected, there were weird moments, too. One contestant removed his derby hat to re-set; another mimicking members.

One guy said he was there because his friends told he could sing. Cayabyab said him his friends had lied.

("Philippine Idol" will air its pilot episode July 29, on ABC 5.)

"THE contestants trust me," says program host Ryan Agoncillo. "I have to be worthy of that trust."

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AT THE CINEMAS

G1	1	2 SUPERMAN RETURNS	3 I WANNA BE HAPPY	4		
G4	1 SUPERMAN RETURNS	2 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN: DEAD MAN'S CHEST	3			
	4 INITIAL D	5 UNITED 93	6 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN: DEAD MAN'S CHEST	7 LOVERSCHOOL		
GB1	1 SUPERMAN RETURNS		2 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN: DEAD MAN'S CHEST			
GB3	1		2			
	3		4	5		
ATC	1	2 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN: DEAD MAN'S CHEST				
	3 SUPERMAN RETURNS	4 LOVERSCHOOL	5 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN: DEAD MAN'S CHEST			
ACC	1	2	3 SUPERMAN RETURNS	4 SEE NO EVIL		
M2	1 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN: DEAD MAN'S CHEST	2 I WANNA BE HAPPY				
	3 INITIAL D	4 SUPERMAN RETURNS	5			

At the Activity Center

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Claudine ...

Transcription of Claudine Santiago: "We still need to fix lots of papers, like my passport."

Their life together is, of course, a work in progress, just like their home.

"We haven't had major disagreements—just minor ones," the actress related. "For example, we haven't installed shelves, so I [got] a clothes cabinet."

Problem was, they had to install the clothes cabinet right where Raymart's favorite punching—or, rather, lounge—bag was.

It took a lot of convincing, but Claudine got her way though Raymart is very finicky about their conjugal home's interiors.

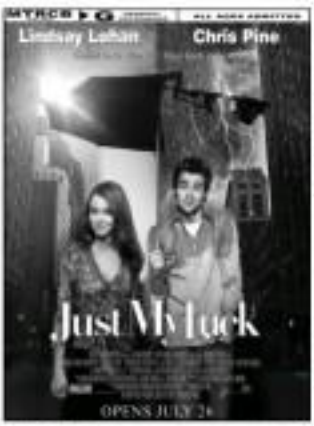
Marriage is about making compromises, she pointed out. It is a concept they have picked up in church, the Victory Christian Fellowship. "Submission through Mercy," Claudine noted. "There's a way to submit to one's husband and still be happy."

The past four months have been a journey of discovery.

"Our parents, Robert Hirn, told me that I was a control freak," she said, laughing. "Up to now, I still need to change a lot in that aspect."

Apart from doing "Lokoh" and an ABS-CBN soap, "Maging Kapuso" (with Pedro Penduko), Claudine is also taking up Child Psychology at Thomson, a correspondence school. The course comes in handy in raising 2-year-old adopted daughter Sahara, she said, as well as in handling her young students in Dubai.

"I love children," Claudine stressed. "I'm sure motherinks away from graduating. Hopefully, I'll finish this year. I chose the course because I look up to Gie, who's a schoolteacher. When I was a kid, she was my icon."



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ENTERTAINMENT

BRYCE'S "real" name is Story. "Lady in the Water" also stars Paul Giamatti.

Bryce Dallas Howard is 'Lady in the Water' and Spider-Man's other girl

LOS ANGELES—CONGRATULATIONS TO Pia Clemente, first Filipino-American woman to receive an Oscar nomination for the short film "Our Time Is Up." She's been invited to become a member of the Academy of Motion Arts and Sciences.

"Not everyone in the industry gets this chance to become a member and vote in the Oscars. Academy president Sid Ganis says in as a statement." "Two years ago, the Academy decided to slow membership growth ... [We] are most satisfied [with] the most exceptionally qualified."

ONLY IN HOLLYWOOD

Aldwin F. Sigbaden

Pia joins 120 film artists and executives who include Tate Bacon, Jodie Gyllenhaal, Felicity Huffman, Heath Ledger, Keira Knightley and Forest Strong. Pia's fellow nominees for "Our Time," director Bob Perelstein, was also invited.

Spider-Man's girl

Big things are happening to Bryce Dallas Howard, talented actress-daughter of "The Da Vinci Code" director and Oscar winner Ron Howard.

Last month, Bryce, 25, married long-time boyfriend, actor Seth Gabel, 34, in Connecticut. The news was not as much about the wedding but about the family honeymoon that followed. Bro Bro parents, grandparents, siblings, cousins, aunts and uncles in Turkey where they boarded a chartered yacht that sailed to Athos's North Coast and then to France.

Bryce will also be Spider-Man's other girl friend, Gwen Stacy, in "Spider-Man 3." The ac-

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GALLERIA

1 PIRATES OF THE CARRIBBEAN 2 - THX
2 PIRATES OF THE CARRIBBEAN 2
3 PIRATES OF THE CARRIBBEAN 2
4 PIRATES OF THE CARRIBBEAN 2
5 SUPERMAN RETURNS
6 VICTORY
7 PIRATES SOF THE CARRIBBEAN 2
8 I WANNA BE HAPPY
9 LOVE WRECKED
10 SEE NO EVIL

ERMITA

1 PIRATES OF THE CARRIBBEAN 2
2 BATAS MILITAR
SEE NO EVIL
3 I WANNA BE HAPPY
4 PIRATES OF THE CARRIBBEAN 2
5 SUPERMAN RETURNS
6 LOVE WRECKED
7 PIRATES OF THE CARRIBBEAN 2

METRO EAST

1 LOVE WRECKED
2 PIRATES OF THE CARRIBBEAN 2
3 PIRATES OF THE CARRIBBEAN 2
4 SUPERMAN RETURNS
5 SEE NO EVIL
6 BATAS MILITAR
PIRATES OF THE CARRIBBEAN 2
7 PIRATES OF THE CARRIBBEAN 2
8 I WANNA BE HAPPY

NOVALICHES

1 PIRATES OF THE CARRIBBEAN 2
2 PIRATES OF THE CARRIBBEAN 2
3 I WANNA BE HAPPY
4 SUPERMAN RETURNS
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CITISQUARE MALABON — PIONEER

1 PIRATES OF THE CARRIBBEAN 2
2 PIRATES OF THE CARRIBBEAN 2
3 RESERVE
4 RESERVE
1 PIRATES OF THE CARRIBBEAN 2
2 PIRATES OF THE CARRIBBEAN 2
3 SUPERMAN RETURNS
4 LOVE WRECKED

CHECK THIS OUT

STA. ROSA — LIPA

1 PIRATES OF THE CARRIBBEAN 2
2 SUPERMAN RETURNS
3 SEE NO EVIL
4 I WANNA BE HAPPY
1 PIRATES OF THE CARRIBBEAN 2
2 I WANNA BE HAPPY
3 LAKE HOUSE
4 SUPERMAN RETURNS

DASMARINAS — ANGELES

1 SUPERMAN RETURNS
2 PIRATES OF THE CARRIBBEAN 2
3 BATAS MILITAR
4 I WANNA BE HAPPY
1 PIRATES OF THE CARRIBBEAN 2
2 I WANNA BE HAPPY
3 BATAS MILITAR
4 SUPERMAN RETURNS

IMUS — STARMILLS

1 SUPERMAN RETURNS
2 BATAS MILITAR
3 I WANNA BE HAPPY
4 PIRATES OF THE CARRIBBEAN 2
1 TAKE THE LEAD
2 BATAS MILITAR
3 I WANNA BE HAPPY
4 SUPERMAN RETURNS
5 PIRATES OF THE CARRIBBEAN 2
6 PIRATES OF THE CARRIBBEAN 2

BACOLOD — ILOILO

1 PIRATES OF THE CARRIBBEAN 2
2 SUPERMAN RETURNS
3 PIRATES OF THE CARRIBBEAN 2
4 THE FAST AND THE FURIOUS 3
5 LAKE HOUSE
6 SEE NO EVIL
1 PIRATES OF THE CARRIBBEAN 2
2 THE MUNI
3 SUPERMAN RETURNS
4 LAKE HOUSE

Bryce Dallas How

From page A2-1

ress, Sidney Magazine and Kirsten Dunst from a love triangle to director Sam Raimi's third installment about the webbed superhero.

Kirsten was, in a way, responsible for Bryce's break. When Kirsten dropped out from "The Village," filmmaker M. Night Shyamalan offered the role to Bryce, a virtual unknown at the time. Playing a blind woman, Bryce earned glowing reviews. Unexpectedly left she should have figured more prominently in the ensuing award shebang for that.

Now three again soon in Night's fantasy-thriller "Lady in the Water" the protagonist a nerd, described in the production notes as "a squiggle-like character," who is being stalked by vicious creatures determined to prevent her from going back home.

Make no mistake—Ayad

Congratulations on your marriage. Have you been together for a long time?

Thank you. Yes, we've been together for about five and a half years. We planned the wedding for a year and a half.

Tell us about your husband.

He's a fantastic guy, way out of my league—a wonderful, supportive, incredible man.

You have a great example in your parents' marriage.

I agree. My parents have been married for 28 years. They were together five years before that. They met in high school, when they were both 16, and have remained committed to each other. I hope I can do that.

Tell us about your role in "Spider-Man 3."

I play a character called Gwen Stacy, Parker's love triangle with Peter Parker and Mary Jane. It is exciting to bring to life a character that was so beloved in the comic books. That film is going to be the most complex and the darkest in this franchise.

Will you be flying?

Yes [laughs]. I can say that only because there is a shot of me flying with Spider-Man that the New York Post has already published.

What do you like about "Spider-Man"?

I love how entertaining it is and the lessons it has for children.

Is it true that you cried when Night offered you the role in "Lady"?

I wasn't bawling or anything, but I was absolutely emotional. On the last day of shooting "The Village," he mentioned that to me—the concept for a new film...and said he was going to call it "Lady in the Water."

Six months later, I saw "The Village" for the first time. I was overwhelmed by the experience. My parents were there and his family was there. He turned to me and said, "I want you to play the lady in 'Lady in the Water'." I felt it was just too much good fortune.

In "The Village," your character wouldn't see. In this movie, your character savely talks. Does playing a character who can't see or the reverse intensely your acting?

What's so great about this story is that my character is able to communicate with so little. In a sense, it heightened the body language, every single little gesture.

I did the Shakespearean film "So You Like It" with Kenneth Branagh. Every single night while filming, I had to learn all three lines. I thought, one day, God will give me a part where I only have to listen. Voila! But it wasn't any easier. I had books-on-tape.

How was your look for this movie achieved?

It was a process dictated by Night. He guided me through the process of physically and emotionally watching the character. I found that the physical fit dictated the emotional life. I would get made up in the morning, look in the mirror and say, "Who is this creature? What does she feel like today?"

I spent three hours in the make-up trailer as they

ward ...

...panned, my whole body calms. They mark-outs I was makes public. I never ever (yes! How many hotties I had in the most bizarre places. Initially, we were a more glamorous route. And then we made her seem almost like an alien. We found this nice middle place where she was an angel, sex like a mesmerized religious icon, but was someone mysterious...mushroom, fragile.

Are your dad and Night friends?

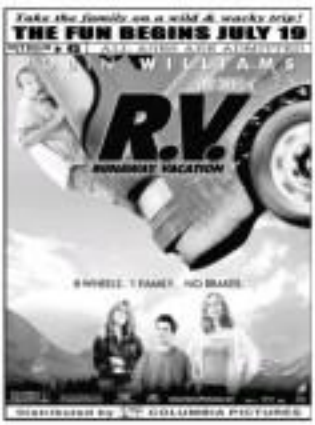
They have become friends. I feel like a matchmaker. I told my dad, "You need a friend who is a filmmaker." I also told Night that.

You talk about Night in glowing terms. But there are people who see him as very arrogant.

"When someone is really good at something, it comes totally from there. Night's films are not a collaboration. You can't say 'A lot of people worked really hard together and come up with this.' The [c]hildren's project and no one see what the critics have said, auditorium are drawn to his movies.

He is incredibly humble. He has moments of insecurity, real moments of unsure-dress bouncing a few weeks ago, he was talking to me about an episode of "Law & Order." He said it was so good. He wondered, how they can do this every week?

(E-mail the columnist at rmmadrid_3000@yahoo.com.)



Slugged, kicked, bit with badminton racket

SO NEAR ... Johnny Depp was in Japan for the Tokyo premiere of "Pirates of the Caribbean: Dead Man's Chest" early this week. Chris Martin was in Hong Kong with his band Coldplay! AFP

RUSHES

PEOPLE OUR SIZE DANCE. "WOW OF Utah" is a major artistic start here up—slapped, kicked and hit with a racket—a marvel in a badminton court in Lai Pihlas. The victim is the daughter of an ambassador." Guess. The major artistic star also made the news, not so long ago, for beating up actresses. And she was recently busted of a sparse investment to benefit children in a drug rehab program.

No no chick flick

Mother Lily is not losing an easy time signing up male hunk in her next movie pictured after "Desperate Housewives." Mars refusing to take the lead role?

Mother's update: Richard Gomez and Annabel Rama out. Alfred Vargas in.

"TC" Aldeguia and a model

Funny girls

Guess who signed up for—and for label—Funny "F" Serrano's last butt and makeup seminar?

Former Bb. Pilipinas aldeguia Antonia and supermodel Bubu Pausa, among many others.

TF is having two more seminars—one from July 22 to 23 and another from July 25 to 27 (call 925-3321). "Participants don't have to be from show biz," he says. "In fact, there were more non-celebs in the past three seminars."

Of course. Most stars would rather be secondary.

Yes, again

LOS ANGELES—Madrigal has not been tired to supermodel Christie Brinkley. She and her fourth husband, Peter Cook, have separated after 10 years together, her publicist said on Wednesday. Brinkley, 52, was once married to Billy Joel. Reuters

AT NIGHT is an ice rink at the "Harbin Ice Lantern Festival" in Hong Kong earlier this week. Above, a ride that looks like a beehive at Beijing's new Happy Valley theme park, another sort that's cashing in on the multi-million dollar entertainment industry. AFP

Just between them

LOS ANGELES—Angelina Jolie will star as the widow of murdered Wall Street Journal reporter Daniel Pearl in a new movie produced by Brad Pitt's company, Global Pictures. Paramount Vantage said on Thursday. Reuters

Un-simple girls

LOS ANGELES—It's been more than a year since they were boss/love buddies in bitter enemies, but Paris Hilton and Nicole Richie have agreed to do another season of "The Simple Life." The "odd couple" will return for a fifth season of their series in 2007, on "E!" Channel. Reuters

Star voices

LOS ANGELES. DreamWorks Animation announced it would keep all the big stars for the voice roles of the third series "Shrek 3." The voice stars will include Mike Myers, Eddie Murphy, Cameron Diaz, Antonio Banderas, Jasper Forrest, Julie Andrews and John Cleese—who all starred in "Shrek" and "Shrek 2." AFP

Guess who?

NEW YORK—Legendary British rock band The Who will launch its first worldwide tour in more than 20 years in September and is set to release its first studio album since 1982, the group announced on Thursday. Singer Roger Daltrey and guitarist/songwriter Pete Townshend, the surviving members of the band driving British forerunner that burst onto the music scene in 1965, will open the tour on Sept. 22 in Philadelphia and perform across the US and Canada into December. Reuters

BACK ONSTAGE. Rolling Stones vocalist Mick Jagger right, and guitarist Keith Richards at the opening of the band's "Bigger Bang" European tour at Milan's San Siro soccer stadium in Milan this week. The tour was delayed after 62-year-old Richards fell off a tree. AFP

PG-13

Kapuso, 56 na tayo!

ISA PONG KARANGALAN ANG PATULOY NA MANGUNA SA INYONG PUSO!

Kasabay po ng patuloy niyong pagtangkilik,
ay patuloy rin po ang paglaki ng agwat ng ating ratings sa kabila!

JAN-JUN 2006 OVERALL CHANNEL RATINGS
Mega Manila TV Households TOTAL DAY (6am-12mn)

	1st Qtr	2nd Qtr
GMA	18.3	17.7
ABS-CBN	13.7	11.9
DIFF (GMA-ABS)	4.6	⬆5.8

JAN-JUN 2006 OVERALL CHANNEL RATINGS BY DAYPART
Mega Manila TV Households TOTAL DAY (6am-12mn)

		1st Qtr	2nd Qtr
Morning (6am - 12nn)	GMA	8.4	9.3
	ABS-CBN	6.1	5.7
	DIFF (GMA-ABS)	2.3	⬆3.6
Afternoon (12nn - 6pm)	GMA	19.6	17.6
	ABS-CBN	13.9	11.8
	DIFF (GMA-ABS)	5.7	⬆5.8
Evening (6pm - 12mn)	GMA	25.7	26.2
	ABS-CBN	20.7	18.3
	DIFF (GMA-ABS)	5.0	⬆7.9

15 OUT OF THE TOP 20 PROGRAMS ARE ON GMA
2ND Quarter 2006

RANK	PROGRAMS	CHANNEL	RTG (%)
1	CAPTAIN BARBELL	GMA	40.1
2	SHAKA	GMA	36.2
3	ANG NAMI'Y KUMUSTA SAIYO	GMA	34.1
4	ENCANTADIA PAG-IBIG HANGGANG WAKAS	GMA	33.8
5	JEWEL IN THE PALACE	GMA	33.1
6	I LUV NY	GMA	33.0
7	LOVE OF THE CONDEMNED HEROES	GMA	30.3
8	[illegible]	ABS-CBN	29.9
9	REESE'S FLAMBOYANT HEROES TAKE ALL	GMA	29.8
10	EXTRA CHALLENGE	GMA	29.7
11	PINOY MEETS AMERICA	GMA	29.3
12	KAPUSO MO, JESSICA SOHO	GMA	27.2
13 - 14	[illegible]	ABS-CBN	27.1
	[illegible]	ABS-CBN	27.1
15	24 ORAS	GMA	27.1
16	[illegible]	ABS-CBN	24.6
17	SINBUSCAS	GMA	24.2
18	[illegible]	ABS-CBN	23.6
19 - 20	MEL & JOEY	GMA	23.5
	[illegible]	GMA	23.5

Maraming, maraming salamat sa patuloy na pagtangkilik at pagtitiwala, Kapuso!

GMA
Kapuso ng Buong Pilipino

IN THIS ISSUE
■ Calasiao's 'white gold' /B1
■ He didn't make it to Everest... but his clothes did /B2

Sunday BIZ
Business Features Editor Margie Quimpo-Espino

Franchising: Food is out, services in

By Desiree L. Lucas

THE LEADING lights of the local franchising industry are all predicting a bright future for this way of doing business, once written off as the "tamad" (lazy) route to entrepreneurship.

Consider this little piece of statistic: According to the Philippine Franchise Association (PFA), the number of franchised businesses has grown in the past few years from a mere 5 percent of all shops in the country, to an estimated 12 percent of local retail shops.

That means that three out of every 20 stores or establishments you will encounter along the (pick one) will be a franchise business. Even only ten out of every 20 establishments a few years ago.

The ratio will be even higher inside a shopping mall in this mall-crazy country where as much as two-thirds of all tenants are franchisees.

One would think that this threshold growth in recent years would have already brought franchising to its plateau.

Not so, says the widely-acknowledged "father of Philippine franchising."

Speaking to the media in a press conference earlier this week, PFA chair emeritus Jaime Gin encouraged aspiring businessmen to considering the franchise mode.

"The opportunities are there, and they are big," he said. "When people ask me, 'Is it too late to get into franchising?' The answer is 'no' because we still have a lot of room for growth."

Gin feels that the local business scene has the potential to mimic the US retail industry where franchise businesses make up about 40 percent of all retail establishments in the consumer sector—a staggering two

RANK STORIES /B2

There's a big business in every small one

By Tina Arceo-Dumlao

THERE ARE FUTURE JOLLIbee Corp. and National Bookstores hidden in small businesses just waiting to be discovered.

This is the belief of the Philippine Franchise Association, an umbrella group of franchising companies, which is why it goes to great lengths to look for start-up companies to be featured in its annual franchise fair, which is running this year from July 14 to 17 at the World Trade Center.

Former PFA president Manuel Siggaoat tells the business how just a few years ago, Bayan Habayanis was one of the new business concepts being "incubated" by the association.

Today, Bayan Habayanis has over 100 branches all over the country and has even recently opened its first branch in the United Kingdom.

Siggaoat says he is confident that there are other concepts that will likely exhibit the same growth, especially those from the provinces.

For this year's show which will end today, businesses to be featured in the emerging concepts section come from the retail, food and services sectors.

On the food sector, there's the Sterling Yummy'Ho Delights, Anak ng Bitgoo of the Cinco Holdings Corp., Jimmy's Siopao, Hero Great Bites and the Highlander Brown Rice Tea.

Sterling Yummy'Ho Delights started in 2001 and offers fried snack foods, such as prawn strips, crispy siomai, lobster balls and siopao rolls.

Hero Great Bites, on the other hand, started just last December 2005 and is out to conquer the processed meats industry with its own line of Hungarian sausages, tapa, tocino, longganisa, corned beef, sweet ham, hamburger patties and hotdogs.

Objects of Wood Inc. and Kalla became this year's retail entries.

Objects of Wood manufactures and exports high quality wood pendants, such as wood rounds, displays for plates, jars, vases, bookends and small furniture pieces.

It started operations in 1986 with business geared toward the export sector. It was only recently that it has decided to move aggressively explore the local market.

Kalla, on the other hand, is into bags and accessories, and already has branches at Eastwood City, Riverbanks Center and Robinsons Metro East.

Like many businesses, Melanie Ong's Kalla started from her hobby of making trendy bags from the garage of her home.

Encouraged by the response from her family and friends, she decided to make a business out of her hobby.

Today, Ong intends to make Kalla the most popular line of bags for girls, young adults and women looking for a unique bag to add to their collection.

The PFA expects a boom in the services sector, and claims continue to emerge.

FINDS /B3

KALLA bags

AyalaLand Premier

I didn't get to keep the starfish... I didn't keep the sea anemone either.

But I'm keeping the baby the nature keeper gave me!

Family time. Endless moments.

ANVAYA COVE

Calasiao's 'white gold'

The cup-shaped, bite-sized, soft rice cakes put this town in the culinary map

By Yolanda Sonda-Fuertes
PEP Northern Luzon Bureau

CALASIAO, PANGASINAN—What goes best with a steaming plate of *pancit guisado* (stir-fried noodles), a hot pot of chicken soup or a cup of native chocolate?

Most you are in the central Pangasinan town, look for the Calasiao puto—that cup-shaped, bite-sized, soft rice cake that almost melts in the mouth.

Calasiao's puto, dazzled in the town's "white gold," has put this town in the country's culinary map.

Several villages are involved in puto making but Barangay Bolaney is considered the epicenter of production. At least 80 percent of households there are puto makers but no wonder: one small anywhere who wanted the traditional home industry.

Day and night, residents there churn out thousands of puto that would later find their way into breakfast and snack plates in the Ilocos and other areas.

Puto makers here will readily share their recipe to anyone interested, but no other town has copied the taste and consistency of the Calasiao puto, which sells for P45 a kilogram (about 80 pieces).

They say there is no secret in the production of the Calasiao puto but one maker says the old varieties are where the usual glutinous rice is fermented could be behind the taste and consistency of their product. No chemical additive is used in the fermentation process.

Puto makers say the industry has remained a family business in which the product is given a "personal touch."

From 2002 to 2005, the provincial government, through its livelihood program, assisted the puto makers by organizing them into a cooperative.

Gov. Victor Agbayani says a total of P1.3 million was loaned out to the cooperative. The amount has been repaid, he adds.

The local government of Calasiao built stalls in front of the town plaza where puto and other native delicacies like bocayo (sweetened coconut nuggets), uraro (steamed sticky rice wrapped in banana leaves) and bacatsa (rice malter) are sold. The stalls are open 24/7 to cater to residents and tourists who would crave for the delicacy.

In December 2002, Mayor Rey Macandog and the local government urged a puto festival to market the town's product.

WORKER places green dyes on the molder.

LADY workers at the puto factory prepare the packaging for the newly steamed puto ready for delivery.

THREE YOUNG lady helps in her family's puto business in Calasiao.

A WORKER removes the puto from its molder at the factory of the Bacoma family in Barangay Dinalaoan, Calasiao, Pangasinan.

He didn't make it to Everest. . . but his clothes did

By Frank Cimatu
PEP Northern Luzon Bureau

BAGUIO CITY—Levi Hayakungan, a member of the First Philippine Mount Everest Expedition (FPMEE) may not have been chosen to reach the summit of Mt. Everest this year, but he saw a good opportunity to have his line of mountaineering apparel reach the top of the world.

One may see such huge brands of mountaineering apparel (Sil, North Face, Levi's, Timberland, Gap, Columbia, Berghaus, Nike and Adidas, among others) sponsoring climbers but there is also a chance that a Baguio sportier in a climb in the 80 meters may be wearing a "Lagalag."

The name (more accurate word, which means "wandering" or "wanderer," was finds history by the 1984 film, "Lagalag: The Eddie Fernandez Story," starring Rudy Fernandez as the machine idol turned pulitiko).

But it was the name that stuck to Hayakungan's mind when he resigned from his high paying job as a foreign trading company to start his own business.

"Lagalag" refers to the mentality of my generation who may be highly educated but have a wanderlust and great hunger for adventure," the 33-year-old University of the Philippines/Ateneo graduate says with a grin.

Hayakungan may have officially climbed his first mountain when he was in high school in the ages, but as he says, "When you are born and raised in the Cordillera, you are climbing mountains all your life."

He joined the UP Mountaineers and is one of five UPM members in the Mt. Everest expedition. He is also one of two Cordilleran in the Ramon Magsaysay Awardee Foundation, was inspired in a northwards thumb and had to bag off from the Mt. Everest climb.

With "Lagalag," Hayakungan entered his backyard industry in Kind, designing and making jackets, shorts, shirts and accessories, logo using the same technology that the made bigger brands use, plus but at a much lower price.

His pants, for example, sell for about 3500 P1,300, almost four times lower than the price of more popular mountaineering apparel. His short pants sell for P650-P750/piece.

The "official" uniform of the FPMEE members is "Lagalag." Jan Dimson and Ronda "Pastor" Emnin wear "Lagalag" on their way to Mt. Everest's summit and as did the other members who stopped at Base Camp in Nepal.

Hayakungan revealed the 14 members who went to Nepal with their apparel for free.

"What we were there, we later have to give them away to our sherpas (Tibetan guides) to how one kind so they can the first to wear them there," he says.

Hayakungan says he expects sales to grow steadily with continued exposure.

"Lagalag" is designed also for regular use and is popular as casual clothing. They are lightweight, durable and with great ventilation, and moisture-wicking qualities, he says.

"I see symbolism in them because, unlike cotton, they don't absorb moisture which may cause hypothermia while you are up there," he says.

Hayakungan markets his apparel to sportswear stores in shopping malls. He has seven employees in his backyard factory in Kind.

He can have a modest life on his earnings, he says, but money is not the goal of it all.

He had worked for environmental nongovernment organizations like the World Wildlife Fund and has joined the FPMEE on its speaking tours throughout the country to advocate environment and conservation.

Hayakungan says his business idea is Yves Dominguez, founder of Patagonia, a $250 million company involved in top quality outdoor goods. Chouinard, however, is also a mountaineer, surfer and fisher as well as an environmentalist who started the recycling of soda bottles as fabric.

HAYAKUNGAN

Patagonia's biggest project is the Save for Environment launched in 2004 in the United States, which called for environment-minded residents to vote for pro-environment candidates and issues.

Hayakungan says he also plans to expand his products and go on environmental campaign.

But as of now, his plate is still to climb Mt. Everest.

In May, Hayakungan was the FPMEE's official photographer as well as the motivational speaker, which is his part-time job back home.

He will be part of the 30-member team that will scale Mt. Everest in a "Unity Climb" next year.

Five of the expedition members will again head the same southern route in Nepal that Gregorio Pimentel and Boots Gonzalez followed while the other five will seek the much harder northern ways on the Tibet side. The team will include three women. The 10 members plan to converge at Everest's peak.

Hayakungan and the other members will, of course, be climbing "Lagalag" on the top of the world. "I will also be bringing something from Baguio," he says.

There's a big . . .

From page B1

There's Ang Sasa Ilo, which is into the hay displacement business. Bachelors Driving Institute, which wants to bring professional driving school services to the people, and Cardpitos, which designs and prints its own line of wedding invitations.

Pimentel says PPA wants to see to these companies and explains to them the benefits of opening up their business to franchising as part of the agency's to increase the number of Philippine franchisees.

He explains that the PPA has given its blessing to franchising as part of its effort to cater to consumers of all sizes.

But the small companies, PPA brings them to the show under the umbrella concept evident to make them visible, especially if they are coming from outside Metro Manila.

ANAK ng Bayan

For medium-scale firms that already have working businesses models and perhaps even one to two franchisees, PPA encourages them to go to the franchise show so put them on their ways to becoming national brands.

And for the large ones, going outside the Philippines in the next step, for them to show what Philippine firms have what it takes to break into the world market.

But it is the small-to-medium PPA particularly wants to bring out into the open.

To meet this end, Pimentel says that the PPA has tied up with the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry to identify at least three to four concepts from the regions that can be fostered.

In this way, the PPA hopes to take part in the emergence of more Jollibee success stories.

Franchising: Food is out, services in

From page B1

ent of every five stores on the street.

Why is the Filipino business populist attuned to it franchising, standing out among even the traditionally more entrepreneurial Filipinos in the region like the Chinese or the Indians?

The franchising business involves the "selling" or "renting out" of a business concept and brand to a third party which will then operate the retailer under its name/store with guidelines set by the original owners.

The franchisees' risks are reduced by relying on an established brand or product, while the franchisors' revenues are multiplied through the royalties paid to them.

In actual practice, the size spectrum of franchise businesses varies greatly from large venues, (vans and fast food chains like McDonald's and Jollibee to small carts situated in shopping malls or street corners.

The PPA—the umbrella organization of the country's franchisors and franchisees—says this is evidence of the potential of the business model, whether the business holds a franchise from a food chain, a fashion establishment, or a service business like a spa or a dry cleaning and laundry business.

"The challenge for the PPA is how to help its members keep up with global and local challenges amid growing intense competition," said PPA chair Angela Bing S. Limpoco.

PPA is now urging prospective owners into the franchising scene to consider sectors other than the food business—the traditional brand and latter of franchisors before the concept became big.

"This area is already saturated," Lim said. "It has become intense."

He said the next hot business to be in—as far as franchisors and franchisees are concerned—is the service industry, especially businesses which leverage Filipinos' well-known warmth and hospitality.

Lim is particularly excited about the spa and health maintenance business which is now a $25-billion global industry.

"This is big business, and Filipinos are seen are their strengths in 'felxi' (traditional Filipino therapeutic massage) to the franchising business," he said.

Lim also noted that opportunities exist for small and successful franchisees to bring their success to a higher level.

"The key word that we're stressing is 'nationwide,'" he said, urging businesses to think big. "You have to be able to grow nationwide. If you can bridge that, there's no reason why you can't go international."

All these developments however or have attracted parties with less than noble intentions.

Of late, the franchising industry has seen the proliferation of businesses offering "franchise for" to would-be investors willing to part with at least P500,000 as their "reservation fee."

Lim says that aspiring entrepreneurs should be wary of these "get-rich-quick" schemes. He refused to call them "scams" just yet.

In several cases, Lim said the PPA has received reports of investors losing their hard-earned reservation fees because the franchisor decides against awarding the "free franchise"—reasonably for in some reasons stipulated in fine print—and forfeiting the investor's money.

"We have received a lot of complaints from people recently about these activities," he said.

The PPA chair therefore lamented that many victims of this scheme are those who can ill-afford to fight a long drawn out legal battle, mainly because their only disposable resources are those which they already invested, and lost, in the franchise proposition."

"They can't even afford a lawyer," he said, adding, "There are many people getting this from a lot of P50,000 investments."

To help interested franchisees, Lim and other encourage them to seek the advice of PPA professionals, many of whom will be available for assistance during the organization's Philippine International Franchise Conference and Expo from July 13-16 at the World Trade Center in Pasay City.

It pays to go after the premium market

Korean firm finds the mass market has become too crowded

DIGITAL appliances plant in Cavinte, Korea. Other photos show the Air Wash washing machine and Quatro cooking oil

By Margie Quiniquini-Espino

IN 2003, SAMSUNG Electronics, one of the the largest Korean firms in the world, took a hard look at its markets.

The 37-year-old firm studied how their markets were moving and what was to be the point-by-for growth in each.

"We saw that the mass market is there but everybody is there. Profits are low and competition is high," regional marketing director Edwin Bob recalled during the press meeting at the Samsung Digital Appliances Roadshow 2006. The Roadshow brought around dealers and journalists from the Asia-Pacific Region and Oceania in show the latest offerings of the firm in town).

At the same time, Bob adds, "the lifestyles of the people are improving and the first step is to capitalize on this. The demand for high-end products is growing as disposable income increases."

The huge lower-end market nonetheless provides a big base for product upgrades as their income go up.

With the realization that there was not much competitive edge to be achieved in the mass market after with its low entry barriers and stiff competition, Samsung changed its tack.

"Let's differentiate ourselves" was the top officials' line, said Bob.

And differentiate they did. They moved out of the mass market and targeted a new market—the the high-end or premium market.

"Samsung created a demand (for its products)," says Koh.

The move was logical because from the start the firm had placed research on its priority list. This enabled the firm to come up with more technologically-advanced products. It also narrowed its design methodology creating for itself innovative and unique looking products that the premium market seeks.

The results?

Koh reports that the average price index of Samsung products went up, resulting in some of its products having the high-est price tags.

To strengthen its leadership in the high-end market in Korea, Samsung created a new brand for its audio-visual products—HAVI and for its digital appliances—Bravio.

Koh claimed leadership in the premium market. He cites that while industry grew by 10 percent, Samsung's growth was 16 percent in the home mar-ket.

"In 2004 we achieved premium leadership and in 2006 we extend our premium leadership with a 'pure luxury' tag."

Samsung's worldwide rank in terms of revenue among electronics firms is the world ranked 7 (behind Hewlett-Packard) since 2002 from seventh in 1997.

In the Philippines, Samsung Electronics Philippines Corp. president Spencer Shim said becoming a member one in the mile by mile and no foot celebrations.

Overall sales of Samsung in the Philippines grew by 30 percent in 2005 over 2004.

During the roadshow Samsung unveiled four new innovative products.

The most unique was the Air Wash system for washing machines which does not need water and soap to wash clothes.

"The Air Wash system offers de-odorizing, sterilizing and fabric re-conditioning by blowing water jet into the fabric. Thanks to the fast air and physical power of the washers, unpleasant odors can now be removed in one touch. The Air Wash washing machine is ideal for hard to wash cushions, pillows, and other padding that can be inhabiting grounds for mites and ticks."

Those washing machines will be in the local market by September.

Another new technology that Samsung introduced was the Quatro cooking system for refrigerators. They created a set with four doors that have individual temperature settings.

Rosephil Yang, refrigerators overseas sales and marketing manager of Samsung Electronics in Korea claimed the four cooking system will actually result in about 15 percent power savings for Koreans.

The goal of Samsung in the Philippines, says Shim, is to be number one in all the categories they work in.

"The owners they have to beat brands like Nokia for mobile phones, JVC for TV, and Sony for audio visual and Panasonic for white goods."

"There are many competitors so our strategies are different to us. our we are already number one. The strategy is to be aggressive in workable," stated Shim.

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HOW JOBS OPPOR-AS MANY BOOKSTS, FEW jobs can be as exciting, fun and rewarding as being a wedding coordinator or planner.

Rita Nieri of Rita Nieri Event Planners in cooperation with Assumption College offers its program on wedding coordinator titled - Introduction to professional wedding coordination on August 10 to August 12 at the Mother Carmen Graduate School Center of Assumption College, San Lorenzo Village in Makati City.

This comprehensive 3 day course aims to educate and provide qualified individuals with the necessary knowledge and skills to become a dedicated career professional in the field of wedding coordination. The course includes: interview on event management and wedding coordination business, wedding budget / time line preparations, supplier inquiries and negotiations, on the day event and preparation, client management, start-up business basics and dealing with official and non-officials. A Certificate of Attendance shall be given to those who have attended at least 2 complete days of the session.

For more information, call: 840-1497, 840-3556, 893-0156 or e-mail at gilbertbjdd@gmail.com/nieri_events@yahoo.com

Learn to make soap

LEARN THE TECHNICAL KNOW-HOW ON how to make different soap and start your own soap business at home. The Caloocan Town-ship Skills Development Program will conduct a one-day seminar on soap-making to be held at the Ubihan Alumni Center, Magsaysay Avenue, Tuason St., Kingsway of Old Philippines-Ubihan, Quezon City on July 20, Thursday, from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Topics to be discussed are sourcing of materials, costing. There will be chance on experience on how to make liquid dishwashing soap, liquid soap, liquid all purpose soap, bar detergent soap, herbal bath soap powder soap, car shampoo. Beauty care topics: liquid bleach, fabric softener, the kind bowl cleanser. the participants will receive certificate of training right after the seminar. For questions, call 912-48-28, 426-78-26, 912-29-24, 911-20-66, and 911-65-51.

MasterCard Worldwide

MASTERCARD International, a considering a new corporate name, MasterCard Worldwide. The company is also unveiling a new corporate signature and adopting a new corporate tagline, The Heart of Commerce™.

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IN THIS ISSUE
- Travel by land, take the E train /C2
- Sea Princess gets Bench feverish /E2

Sunday LIFESTYLE
Lito Chelo Batal-Fortuno

The gift of 'in-sight'

By Miguel Escano
Cebu Bulor
Photos by Rudy Esparas

FR. JESUS FERNANDEZ, SJ, IS doing Christ's work by sharing the gift of "in-sight," Founder of the Ephpheta Foundation, he enables the blind and the disabled to see their self-worth. As head of the Tulalasan Foundation, he also empowers married couples to see beyond their individual differences.

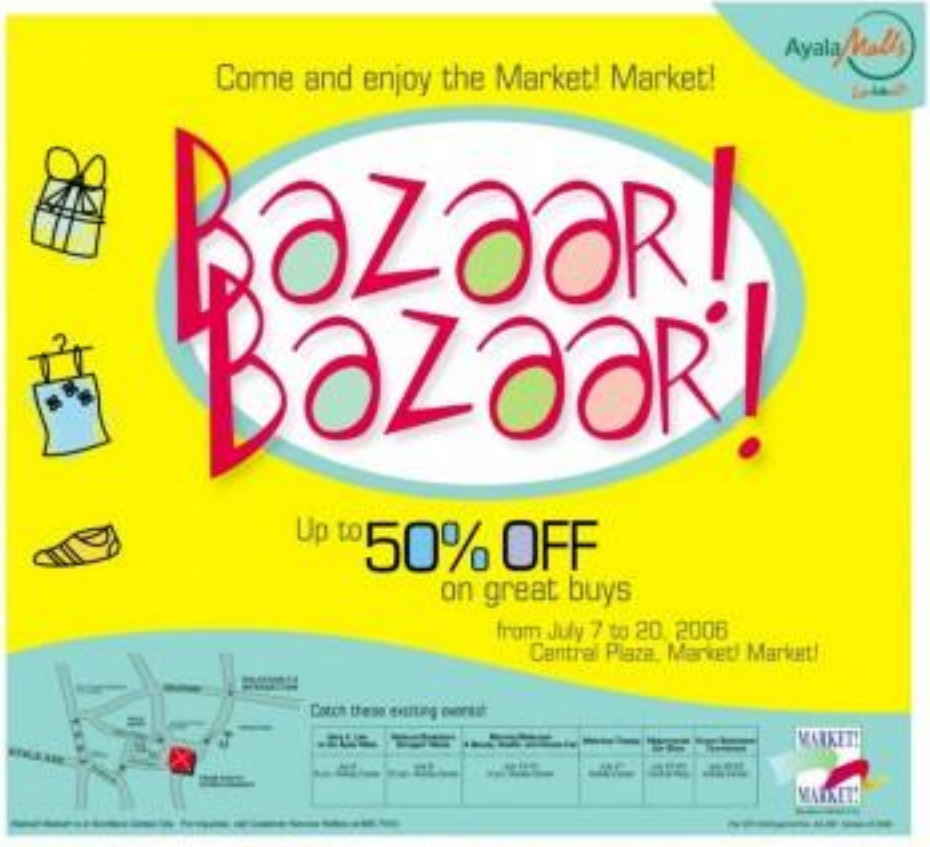
At an age when others would readily retreat from the demands of the world, this tireless priest plans to devote his remaining years to his chosen apostolates: the blind, married couples and families.

Fr. Jess, as he is affectionately called, is celebrating two milestones this year. Last June 28, he celebrated his 75th birthday. Three days earlier on June 25, married couples commemorated 25 years of the Tulalasan Foundation, a marriage encounter community.

"A little past 1 made with God about my appointment with 'You take care of my blind, I take care of your families,' God has kept his

At 75, Fr. Jess Fernandez, SJ, remains a tireless worker in his chosen apostolates: the blind, married couples and families

JESS Fernandez, SJ



Sunday LIFESTYLE Travel

ALL aboard the Euro express

NO LESS than French fashion designer Christian Lacroix designed the interiors of the luxury trains.

SHOPPING tours via train are gaining popularity among Asian tourists.

Lapping up miles in Europe

By Alex T. Vergara

WHILE TRAVELING BY TRAIN ALL over Europe is a routine among continentals, it has yet to catch on with tourists, with the notable exceptions of the Japanese, Koreans and Americans.

"It's traveling by train is one of the cheapest, fastest and most convenient ways to experience the sights, sounds and flavors of the Old World," said Xavier Thuret, sales director of RailEurope.

For one, you don't have to travel several miles from downtown to get to an airport, as most train stations in Europe are located in the middle of the city.

You also don't have to spend precious minutes checking in since most train companies (except Eurostar) have done away with such a time-consuming procedure.

"If you regularly travel in European films," the Frenchman added, "you would find many films where important scenes take place in a train. If you ask your European friends, most of them probably have a story to tell you about something that happened to them on a train."

Another main reason why first-time foreign tourists to discover the joys of traveling by train across Europe. That was back in the 1960s, said Thuret.

"First time travelers to Europe usually travel in groups," he observed. "Their trips are usually limited to big cities. Planes have come back, however, they usually favor their travel to a specific destination or two, either individually or in pairs."

Thuret recently visited a number of South-east Asian countries, including the Philippines, where RailEurope conducts business seminars. International Tours, Inc. (tel. 867-9888) currently represents the company locally.

RailEurope is one of the biggest sellers of train tickets—from the point-to-point variety to the more expensive and comprehensive continent-wide pass—to Europe's extensive system. So what's the best deal to go for?

Time, budget, interests

It really depends on how much time and budget you have, not to mention your interests. One of RailEurope's most popular passes, for instance, costs $999 per person and allows you to go to as many as 18 countries within a period of 10 months.

You can also avail yourself of a national pass, which allows you to travel extensively in a specific country. The cumbersome pass is popular among families, couples and senior citizens. Students on vacation have generally more time in their hands and, thus, go for Europe-wide passes.

"Prices can start as low as $129 to as high as $500," said Thuret. "It all depends on how long and where you want to travel. Of course, the more countries you intend to, the more expensive the pass."

Since the company itself doesn't own or operate trains, it can't secure the convenience of an every-other-day train service. It can't even guarantee your country or the area. Although most of Europe is now technically borderless (thanks to EU expansion), some and their corresponding railway systems are still managed by individual countries.

Nonetheless, the quality of train travel has greatly improved, as countries, including those in Eastern Europe such as Poland, are working on improving their respective systems. When it comes to the number and quality of high-speed trains that can not lower than 300 kph, France still leads the rest of the continent, said Thuret.

What RailEurope does is provide the public a quick, convenient and time-tailored access to trains that run through Europe (including Scandinavia, Greece, Turkey and countries that make up the former Yugoslavia), with the exception of those in the Baltic region and former Soviet republics, including Russia.

"There's nothing to learn in Europe is quite new among Filipinos. I have yet to find out what destinations appeal to them," said Thuret. "I have been told, however, that France, particularly London, Italy and Switzerland, are popular among Filipinos."

In Singapore where shopping is a big pastime among residents, tourists (or if it weren't elsewhere), the company's general sales agent (GSA) in the city-state recently came up with a "shopping tour."

Food is also becoming a big come-on among Asians. The Japanese, in particular, are fond of fine wines. Of course, fashion cities and flea markets also attract a fair share of devotees.

Because of the global popularity of "The Da Vinci Code," a considerable number of tourists are now going to Paris and London to retrace the main characters' steps, said Thuret.

Such is the power of cause media that it won't come as a surprise if one of RailEurope's enterprising representatives abroad build a tour around it.

E-mail the author at avergara@inquirer.com.ph

EYE for a chandelier has spikes in the hair of this light-opened train.

TRAVEL BRIEFS

MTV stars and DOT celebrity endorsers in Taiwan, singer Hsiang Ma Chen and actor Brian Chen

Subic's attractions star in Taiwanese TV drama

Taiwanese Hsiang Ma Media Production, a top producer of drama series in Taiwan, has chosen the Subic Bay Freeport Zone (SBFZ) as the venue for the drama "Kiat Hsiang Ti Hotel."

The first episode project will showcase Subic as a tourist destination and will feature Legends Hotel, Seaside Island, Ocean Adventure, Zambo-Ti Kalayo and Yacht Club.

The show will be aired at prime time this month on China TV with an estimated three million viewership.

The Department of Tourism is promoting in Taiwan the SBFZ because of its accessibility and added attraction. "We have a only two and a half hours away north of Manila. The international airport receives twice weekly Manila to Air Charter flights from Taipei. Taiwanese tourists also travel directly to Subic on Mandarin Air and ship within the Freeport do not mandatory visas.

Tourism Secretary Joseph H. Durano said, "Taiwan is among the biggest source markets of the DOT's The Manila Economic Cultural Office (Meco) in Taiwan and the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority (SBMA) to promote the Philippines as the ideal tourist destination."

"Visitors from Taiwan in the January to May reached 147,316, or four percent of total arrivals.

HK arrivals near 3 million

Tourist arrivals to Hong Kong reached 1.86 million in May, the Hong Kong Tourism Board (HKTB) reported. The number was 7.3 percent higher than the figure registered in the same period last year. It brought the total for the first five months of 2006 to more than 10.3 million, accounted of 11.4 percent over last year. More than 1.266 million visitors were from mainland China, making the city regional marketers show a decline in arrivals. 44,000 incoming in May was 8% percent. Connected flights than the figure for the same month in 2005.

Play and win

Singapore Airlines' "Fly to Fly the A380 Red and Green" is giving away free seats on their world's first A380 commercial flight and a luxury mini-destinations hotel stay in Singapore and Sydney.

SIA celebrates the A380 historic flight from Singapore to Sydney. The promotion open to all 18 years old and older. It runs until Sept. 15. To join, simply log on to www.singaporeair.com/a380

A celebration of Portugal's culture and cuisine

AMBASSADOR OF PORTUGAL JOAO Cardoso da Silva was in Cebu for a weeklong celebration of Portuguese culture, culture and friendship. His first activity was as special guest at the induction of officers of the Gonzalez Lorjo-Cebu chapter.

The incoming chair is Samuel Chiowon, honorary consul of Portugal in Cebu. He and his lovely wife, **Emily Brondivin Chiowon**, hosted the elegant induction dinner at Salon Madrid of the Casino Español.

It's all in the family, they laughingly remarked, as the inducting officer and guest speaker was Emily's father, Foreign Affairs diner, Francisco Secundino. He has served the Philippines brilliantly as ambassador to Singapore, South Korea, Brunei and, most recently, Canada.

Portuguese Week in Cebu was formally launched at the Shangri-la's Cebu City Hotel whose general manager **Marco Prioleau** welcomed an array of prominent guests. Among them were Cebu City Mayor Tommy Osmeña, with wife Margot, and Vice Mayor Mike Rama who chairs the city's Tourism and Historical and Cultural Affairs Commissions.

Ambassador Da Silva delivered the keynote speech and asked everyone to join him in viewing an important exhibit on the floor. The paintings, were of Portuguese scenery and dresses by two of the country's most eminent artists, Manuel Bordalozzo and Phyllis Estrellera who was present via the evening.

Phyllis spoke of her trip to Portugal and her stay in a monastery at Azeitão, 30 km from Lisbon, the capital. The tranquility and serenity of the place inspired the beautiful sarpes she exhibited on Mercantes.

Food festival

The spirit well sustained, everyone then lined off to the hotel's Café Uno for the launching of the food festival featuring Portuguese specialties. Have you ever wied salted cod (bacalao) cooked with cream? Or a salad of shredded octopus?

Renee Villareis and Debbie Murphy, the hotel's PR ladies, made sure everyone had a good time, and their glasses were brimming with excellent Portuguese red or white wine. They also introduced the guest chef, Antonio Santos, and professor Ivo Carneiro de Sousa, director of Portugal's center for Mediterranean Studies.

Professor Ivo has written a book about Portugal's maritime power. He gave a lecture on the topic and presented his book to the University of San Carlos. He found a fan institute "reunion" in historian Resurreion Sy.

One of the highlights of Portuguese Week was a solemn afternoon mass at the Cebu Cathedral with Msgr. Cito Estrella in main celebration, together with Augustinian Cachero led by the Rector of the Basilica del Santo Niño, Fr. Fr. Andrew Beltejeda, OSA.

The mass featured the image of our Lady of Fatima that was later taken in procession to the site of Magellan's Cross in front of city hall.

Rehabilitated

Magellan's Cross is a must for tourists visiting Cebu. The kiosk houses a large cross that contains splinters of the original cross set upon the very same spot by Magellan and his men when they first came to Cebu 485 years ago, in 1521. The Portuguese government has been instrumental in the recent rehabilitation of the kiosk in the middle of a plaza.

The work has been fabulously done by architect Bidea Arca. It was the perfect occasion to unveil the newly-rehabilitated marker, during a program attended by numerous civic leaders.

Therese Rowles Gonzales, the project director and a prominent member of the city's Parks and Playgrounds Commission, gave an eloquent speech. She efficiently thanked the founder Ito Silva and wished him Godspeed. After completing his Philippine tour of duty, he is off to Venezuela for his new assignment.

PARTY HEARTY: Cebu City Hotel PR manager Renee Villacis (center) with Portuguese Ambassador Joao Cuenco de Silva (right) and Honorary Consul to Cebu Samuel Chiowon

CHEF Antonio Santos, amba Phyllis Estrellera and Ambassador Da Silva

'Aspire to inspire' in 2007

REYNE INC. HAS PRODUCED A 2007 calendar encouraging people to "aspire to inspire" and honoring individuals role to inspire.

The calendar aims to inspire other people to be role models for children and to do what they can to help them to excel.

Featured in the calendar are chef Margarita Forés, pilot captain Manny Ocsin, renowned painter Malang, dancer-choreographer Muthoth Bautista, basketball player Jhorise Cabana, professor Quennie Lee Chua, Sarip Garcia-Velasco & Co. chair David L. Balangue, former Defense Sec. Renato de Villa, singer Jpe Villanueva, nurse-educator Annabelle R. Bermudez, cardiologist William T. Chua, and entrepreneur Bedol E. Reyes.

The calendar celebrates the dreams of child beneficiaries of Reyne. Inc. It aims to inspire people to be like these children, who remain courageous and hopeful in spite of the challenges they face.

Reyne. Inc., is a non-profit, nonprofit organization that helps address the needs of chronically ill children through the Child Life Program in nine Philippine hospitals.

Visit www.keyne.org or call 3352454 or 0920-9072994, or fax 3343454. E-mail kyhotes@yahoo.com

The gift of 'in-sight'

From page 1

side of the research. And I am striving to keep my side, too," says Fr. Jess.

Leading the blind

According to him, "Working for the blind was like God's call to Abraham." He received the call in 1969, the year the Ephpheta Foundation was established.

With no background or experience in working with the blind, he became involved in social outreach and livelihood projects for their benefit. First, the School for the Deaf and the Blind in Pasay City asked Fr. Jess for help in looking for shelter for their blind students, a number of whom were homeless and living under bridges. Next, he became involved in gathering blind beggars in Project 4, QC, and training them in livelihood projects.

Later that year, Fr. Jess and the people he worked with decided to create an organization dedicated to serving the blind. They named the foundation "Ephpheta," after the word Jesus used to heal the deaf and blind in the Bible.

The Ephpheta Foundation strives to integrate the blind into mainstream society. The organization hosts blind persons in a community and "rehabilitates" them through livelihood programs. Members graduate after five months of livelihood training. The latest batch graduated last July 7.

"Most of the blind people we train are uneducated," says Fr. Jess.

The Ephpheta Foundation teaches its members to read Braille. It also trains them for placement courses so that they can be accepted to vocational education courses in public schools.

"Most blind people have an inferiority complex. They have a hard time living with others. We get them to socialize," says Fr. Jess.

During graduation, there is a lot of hugging and crying. "Being separated is hard for them. They've grown so much with their fellow blind," says Fr. Jess. "I feel that a real miracle happens in every group. They are able to realize that they have changed," he adds.

Empowered couples

Having chosen to lead a life of commitment, Fr. Jess helps married couples rediscover their commitment to each other, to their families and to God. He actively participates in the Christian Family Movement, the Married Encounter and the Family Encounter.

As chair of the Feliciano Foundation, Inc., a marriage encounter community and server of the Marriage Encounter Foundation of the Philippines, Fr. Jess conducts one-day marriage enrichment sessions called "Bukluran."

"My advice to couples is to communicate to each other. In the marriage encounter, we encourage couples to dialogue. They come to learn to accept each other as they are," says Fr. Jess.

"There are couples who feel that the marriage encounter is a last resort. We've lost many couples that way. The sponsors of marriage, the grace given to couples, seems to the few when they become honest and open. Couples need continual healing from each other."

Fr. Jess' family ministry started in 1967 when he was a chaplain in the Christian Family Movement. Through the years, he has helped his members to grow spiritually and to practice their faith more maturely. In addition, he has helped them become more apostolic in their outlook as they create parochial foundations in the service of the disabled, the blind and the poor.

Miracle worker

The people he has helped—the blind, married couples and families—insist that Fr. Jess, named after a very high-profile miracle worker, has also worked miracles in their lives.

With Fr. Jess, boundaries are crossed, differences are resolved, and lives are restored under the grace of God. Since becoming a priest in 1964, he has officiated at over 200 marriages. His talent for bringing people together is contagious. In the blind community, around 180 couples have been wed in mass weddings.

Asked whether he is ready to face God in heaven, Fr. Jess shares a story about St. Ignatius, founder of the Society of Jesus.

One of his companions asked St. Ignatius, who was now an old man, if he was content to die now and go to heaven or to wait a little longer. St. Ignatius answered, "I would take the risk so I can do more good."

Fr. Jess says, "I'd like Lord knows me to live longer and to be able to help more people. I'll take that risk." That should make his mission happy.

THROUGH the years, Fr. Jess has helped people grow spiritually and to practice their faith more maturely

In Padre Pio's footsteps

A GROUP OF SANTO PIO DEVOTEES HEADED by Chito and Tess Bolod, together with Manoling and Ruth Torres, formed the very first Padre Pio pilgrimage with the blessings of UNR and Ramon Rodrigues, accredited head of the Center for Padre Pio Foundations.

The tour was started as a suggestion which, by pressing through Santo Pio, became a reality.

With Fr. Arsenio Aurillo of Ormoc City, the group was composed of pilgrims from Bacolod, Ormoc, Bacon and Muntinlupa, UR.

They included Dr. Gloria Pacete, Karen Fuentes, Imelda Bernal, Imelda and Quirino Dizon sister, Anne Ruiz, Celso Gonzalez, Bert and Tata Cendaña, Ch and Lito Cendaña, Benny and Rhodora Lamoret, Lotty Alonzo, Susan Pangilinan, Nestor and Helen Valle III, Elsa Agana, Eleanora Penayos, Cec and Mercedes Mendoza. Boss secret was Chat of the Adams Travel Agency.

Upon arrival in Rome, the Filipino pilgrims had a Mass at the church of Santa Maria Maggiore, visited the Vatican Museum, admired the frescoes of Michelangelo at the Sistine Chapel, toured the Coliseum and the Pantheon, and participated in the papal blessing in St. Peter's Square. The first day ended with a visit to the Trevi Fountain.

The following day started with a visit to Monte Cassino Abbey, an elegant and magnificent monastery situated on a hill overlooking the city. This is where Saint St. Benedict and St. Scholastica are buried in the monastery of the Benedictine monks.

Padre Pio landmarks

The highlight of the trip was the visit to Our Lady of Grace Capuchin Friary in San Giovanni, Rotondo, Italy, where Santo Pio spent countless hours with pilgrims. He was fully accommodated by Fr. Emerlindo, a Capuchin friar and friend of Padre Pio, who was with the stigmatic holy man during his last years in the friary.

Pictures of Santo Pio were shown to the group. The members were filled with mixed emotions as they toured the sacristy and saw the various relics of Padre Pio: his clothes, vestments, cassocks, gloves, even pillows stained with his blood, his writings and the very cross where he received the stigmata.

Finally, they watched the tomb of Padre Pio, and all the pilgrims were touched and swept in the aura of his crypt. They also toured the Michael's cave which Padre Pio frequently visited. It was here where St. Michael appeared to him.

Next stop was Lanciano, where the miracle of the bleeding host took place when Padre Pio was saying mass.

Another unforgettable experience for the group was the visit to Portugal. During the night procession, four male members of the Philippine group were chosen to assist in carrying the image of Our Lady of Fatima on the gurney. The image of the Blessed Virgin was quite heavy but the task was very memorable for those men. Previous to that procession, earlier that day, the group toured the apparition sites of the Virgin and the houses of Lucia and the (sacrificed Jacinta and Francisco.

Museum tour

The next stop was Burgos, cradle of Castilla and the gothic capital of Spain, where the magnificent cathedral, considered a heritage site, is located. The pilgrims had mass at the San Ignacio de Loyola Basilica and toured the museum.

Across the snow-clad Pyrenees Mountains, the group drove to Lourdes for another two nights. They attended a mass in one of the chapels and after meditating at the grotto, the pilgrims had a chance of bathing at the miraculous waters. The humble beginnings of St. Bernadette moved the group as they toured the "Cachot" House), where she stayed with her family.

The next stop was Bayo to Hendaye. A mass was held at the chapel where Sacred Heart of Jesus appeared to St. Margaret Alacoque. Her messenger body lies at the side altar. The 12-hour drive back to the hotel was never boring because of the beautiful scenery along the way.

The group proceeded next to Fevers to visit the Monastery of St. Gilgad where the incorrupt body of St. Bernadette lies. There, they prayed at her favorite spots in the garden.

The last leg of the pilgrimage was Paris. The tour included visits to Notre Dame Cathedral, one of the greatest gothic churches in the world, the majestic Arc de Triomphe, Champs Elysée and famous Eiffel Tower. Before the night was over, the group had the chance to go on a river cruise on the river Seine (Bateaux Mouches).

The 22-day journey was tiring, but the visits of the miracle sites seemed to have given the pilgrims extra energy. The strong bond formed between the members also helped to keep them going.

The group is planning a second pilgrimage, most likely in October, of Eastern Europe for the shrines of the Divine Mercy, the Black Madonna and Sts. Niño de Prague, as well as of the wonderful city of Vienna), and of Western Europe (perhaps another tour to the Vatican and Santo Pio).

Sunday LIFESTYLE

TOYS 'R' Us at Robinsons Galleria is a toy paradise for kids and kids at heart.

ACTION heroes, such as Superman, Batman, Robin, Catwoman, Batwoman and Wonderwoman, grace the grand opening of Toys 'R' Us.

Toys r finally Pinoys'

Parents, put a leash on your kids! Toys 'R' Us is here!

Text by Virgie Baga-Reyes
Photos by Rudy Espero

FINALLY, THE BIGGEST TOY store in the world has come to the Philippines, and now Filipino children can claim to be Toys 'R' Us kids and refuse to grow up.

Located on the fourth level of Robinsons Galleria at Ortigas Center, Toys 'R' Us, the largest specialty toy retailer on the planet, offers Filipino kids and kids at heart a vast array of plaything both for fun and education.

The toy world is spread over a sprawling 2,300 sq. m paradise, which used to be the mall's indoor theme park, Dreamscape.

The new store is the product of Robinsons Retail Group's alliance with Li & Fung Retailing, the official franchisee of Toys 'R' Us in Switzerland in Asia.

"We've been asked why it took so many years to bring the store here," said Jeremy Hobbins, group managing director of Li & Fung Retailing who was in town recently to grace the opening.

"We have had our eye on the Philippines for we [were] a good partner to do it. We feel that the Philippines is a unique market and the retail partner is absolutely a key factor. We have a very good long-term relationship with the Robinsons and Robinsons group. We know they are the right partner for us."

Toys 'R' Us in Robinsons Galleria, the toy shop's 85th store in Asia, is a haven of quality toys, great games, small goods, books, educational and developmental products, sporting goods, juvenile furniture, and kid-friendly electronic, educational and entertainment software.

"The format [there] for all Toys 'R' Us around the globe is the same," said Peter Schutz, chief executive officer of Toys "R" Us, Asia. "And when it comes to merchandise, we do a blend of local buy and imports. In the Philippines, there is a very strong distribution network of toys, and so we put a lot of toys chamber from the local players, but we blended that with a very strong import program particularly of our private brands, such as Jeron Dolls, Sports and Outdoor."

Toys 'R' Us in Robinsons has seven stores, like the shop's 1,400 other branches around the world. "Three years or thereabouts

TOYS D2

MICROSCOPE Set from Edu-Science section

A BUTTERFLY-WINGED fairy holds a Barbie doll set.

UNIQUE ALLIANCE. Robina Gokongwei-Pe, EVP and group governance manager of Robinsons Retail Group; Lucio Gokongwei, president and COO of JG Summit Holdings Inc.; and Jeremy Hobbins, group managing director of Li and Fung Retailing.

Light up *for less*

HOUSEHOLDS benefit the most from energy-saving lamps.

By Miguel Escalo
Correspondent

IT'S THE PUBLIC KNOW HOW MUCH ENERGY-saving lamps can shave off from electricity bills, light bulbs would vanish on an idle everyone's beach.

"Compared with the industrial and commercial sectors, households are poised to benefit the most from the electricity savings generated by energy-saving lamps," says Paul Thomas, general manager for Philips Asia-Pacific.

"Unfortunately, the majority of households in the Philippines are unaware of this," he adds.

Philips Lighting Asia Pacific, a global brand leader in lighting, recently held a press conference to communicate the benefits of switching to energy-saving lamps. The event also marked three years of the Philips Lifeinnova marketing campaign, which aims to educate the public on energy-saving tips and techniques on lighting.

"The challenge is to inform the public, especially Philippine households, on the huge benefits of energy-saving lamps," says Thomas.

In the dark

Most Filipino households are not taking advantage of the benefits, namely longer life spans and electricity savings, of energy-saving lamps.

According to a 2004 survey conducted by the National Statistics Office (NSO), around 13.4 million households in the Philippines have electricity. About 84 percent of this number or 7.2 million households are incandescent bulbs.

A recent survey by Philips Lighting has revealed that only 15 percent of households with electricity or 2.2 million households are energy-saving lamps. The rest are regular lamps from fluorescent tubes to incandescent bulbs.

According to Philips, a household that switches from a normal incandescent lamp to a Philips energy-saving DL (compact fluorescent lamp) and uses it for five hours a day can save up to P700 annually. (This is based on an 18.00 per kilowatt hour rate.)

Philips DLs use 80 percent less electricity compared with regular incandescent light bulbs. This is because a standard light bulb uses 60 watts while a Philips energy-saving bulb uses only 15 watts.

Photo by Ben Nabong

A CHEAPER bulb does not mean more savings.

Photo by Ben Nabong

DLs use 80 percent less electricity.

Photo by Ben Nabong

Photo by Ben Nabong

Photo by Ben Nabong

Living with one man, loving another

DEAR EMILY,

A year and a half ago, I wrote to you about falling in love with a stranger during a business trip. We exchanged e-mail and last month we met again in Tokyo.

We had a wonderful dinner and a very profound conversation. Time did not erase my feelings for him. He brought me back to my hotel, but we were silent in the car.

Suddenly, he asked if he could have tea in my room. I knew what this could lead to, but I welcomed the idea since I didn't want to part from him yet.

I was so nervous. I'd never had a man in a room, other than my husband.

He was nervous, too, spilling tea on his coat. He asked why I didn't ask for a kiss (his line). I said I wanted to behave properly and I was controlling my feelings. But, yes, I wanted him to kiss me. He kissed me so passionately and, the next thing I knew, we were undressed and caressing each other.

Suddenly I asked him to stop. I realized it's morally wrong to continue. He heeded my request... quietly took a shower, dressed, kissed me goodnight and left.

I cried till morning, totally exhausted and disgusted with myself. How could I cheat on my marriage? How could I stop in the middle of what I had always dreamed of—a passionate encounter with the man I truly loved?

Now I'm back and not my usual self. When I have my husband, I feel some guilt. But how I wish something deeper happened between us and that man.

I can't seem to make up my mind about what I really want. How will I move on, living with someone and loving another?

NAMELESS

You're not only playing games with this friend you're supposed to be "in love" with, you're also playing games with your husband.

You are cyber-swooning, moaning and endearing for a stranger you don't know at all.

The e-mail and cybersex conversations don't define a relationship. You were infatuated and not bringing that raging emotion into it unnecessarily cools your life more than it does.

You say it's "morally wrong" to have sex with another man because you're married. But does you sin-it happened anyway-have more for you. It's already "morally wrong" just having this man.

You should just have gone all the way with him and gotten it over with. Period. It would have been the same. Making yourself believe you have remained morally upright by not having sex with him is hogwash!

Not doing it is just as "bad" as doing it.

EMILY'S POST

Emily A. Maroyh

'I wish something deeper happened between us'

And you made love with this stranger, your questions about every nuance and meaning of words you two exchanged would have been answered—finally! But now, you only have these "what ifs" hugging at your head.

You'll never find out if this stranger is worth loving or ending your marriage for. And that's as sad!

If you're terribly unhappy with your marriage, cut yourself some slack and give power of mind a chance. You'll be doing your husband and yourself a favor by being honest with him, instead of pursuing this sham of a marriage.

Life is already full of hypocrisy. Do you really want to be a part of that?

E-mail the author at emaroyh@inquirer.com.ph, thehype_life@yahoo.com or send your letters to Inquirer Center in Mr. Maroyh, c/o Issue the program "Pulidosan Yligtasin," 7:15-8:30 p.m., Monday-Friday, on dwSB 104.3 FM.

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Toys r finally Pinoys'

Point pages B-1

A WIDE array of accessories are available at the Fun Lane.

TOYS can shop for educational and science playthings at the Edu Science section.

Gone—Girls', Boys', Infant, Family Fun, Outdoor and Sports, Toys for Learning and Fun, and Babies "R" Us—carry all kinds of toys according to age and need.

Young girls will certainly enjoy arts and crafts and role-playing stuff from dress-up dolls to mini kitchens) at the Girls' Zone, while boys will marvel at the extensive line of action and racing figures, trucks and vehicles at the Boys' Zone.

Techie youngsters will benefit from the broad array of child-edu items, including the latest kid-friendly technology at the Education and Electronic gaming and Toys for Learning and Fun zones. The stores carry such brands as Fisher-Price, Fun Lane, Edu Science, Bruin and Hasbro Gaming.

Very competitive

"We were informed that there are many toy stores in Manila, but Babies 'R' Us is very good, crowded," said Hobbins. "Competition is very healthy, I think. Our most competition you know, the more people will invest in the market and the whole size of the toy business will grow."

Schaus said Toys 'R' Us had established a good coverage and a good market penetration in most countries.

"Your SUV (retailer) concept very well and it doesn't make us very long to get to Ba. U," he said. "We feel confident that over time the format we got and Fun Index, strength and brand and operation expertise in terms of finding the right product for the market will carry us through. We're a tough competitor."

Toys 'R' Us was, as of in 1948 as a garage business founded by Charles Lazarus in Washington, DC. Since then, it has become an $11-billion company with 1,400 retail stores in over 30 countries. In the US alone, it has 600 stores.

Hobbins pointed out Robinsons had all the products of Toys "R" Us available anywhere else.

"We hope what we bring to you is the exception of the merchandise from around the region. We do all our sourcing ourselves directly and we have a regional team in Hong Kong that looks for the best buys around the world. How it goes in as a retailer is not the best kept and hyped branch," said Hobbins.

All under one playful roof.

BABIES "R" Us's the busiest section among the many stores of Toys "R" Us.

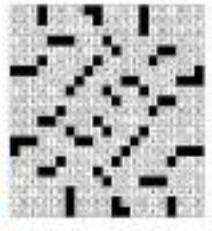
PAPELLIDAE'S chess set, a bonding game for the whole family

CUTE, cuddly stuffed toys at Animal Alley

LITTLE boys enjoy the motorcycle set at the Boys' Zone.

TOYS "R" Us Family and Fun Stores section offers board games and electronic video sets.

ANSWER TO SUNDAY CROSSWORD



PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

Sunday LIFESTYLE

Milestones

We welcome announcements of weddings and engagements. Submit names of engaged couple, names of parents, date and place of wedding, and groom's daughter along with a photo of the couple and a detail of the bridal gown, if any, to the Lifestyle, PO Box 2103 Makati Central Post Office 1261 Makati City. E-mail to lifestyle@inquirer.com.ph. A photo of the bride and groom is required. If the wedding has already taken place, announcements will be published depending on space availability and at no cost to the senders.

REYES-MERCADO

Marisol Almasaren Miranda, youngest daughter of Modesto and Corazon Mercedes of Lumban, Laguna, was married recently to Marvin Kevin Ramas Reyes, youngest son of Edwin and Elvera Reyes of Quezon City, at San Sebastian Parish, Lumban, Laguna. Reception followed at Calraya Springs Golf and Country Club. The bride's gown and the groom's barong were made of pina with handmade embroidery, a specialty of Lumban, Laguna.

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Makati

ABAD-DE JESUS

Marc Andrew Abad, son of Amado and Bertha Abad, will marry Jackie Lee S. de Jesus, daughter of Adriano and Aurelia de Jesus, on July 23 at Santuario de San Jose. Reception will follow at Black Black Golf and Country Club, Shaw Boulevard, Mandaluyong City. The bride will wear a Blue Espejon design.

ABANILLA-VILLANUEVA

Joey Abanilla, son of Gerino and Mercedes Abanilla, will marry Maricel Villanueva, daughter of Mariano and Bibiana Villanueva, on July 30 at Santo Fiasco de Pesda Church, Malolos, Bulacan. Reception will follow at the bride's residence.

SAN LUIS DEBUT

Lovelle Rhe "Lovely" Hanne San Luis, daughter of Alvin and Susanne San Luis, will celebrate her 18th birthday on July 22 at Sophia Garden, Pedro Gil, Ermita, Intramuros, Manila. She is a sophomore student at the DLSU-BV College of Accountancy.

The celebration will wear a rainbow-colored fabe princess gown made of satin and frosted organza with beads by Lorena Mariano.

ESCOVER DEBUT

Angelique Cara Sanchez Escovedo, eldest child and only girl in the brood of three of Ferdinand Valentine and Maria Bella (nee Sanchez) Escovedo, will celebrate her 18th birthday at 7 p.m., July 23, at Maypole Ballroom of Manila Hotel. She is a first year Political Science student at the University of the Visayas. Her gown is by Ben Barredo while choreography for the cotillion is by Dipee Mon.

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BANKER Mike de Jesus and former Miss Universe Gloria Diaz

ICONE expert Socrates Papapostolof and Rocks marketing manager Joel Marie Sy

BEAUTY AND SUBSTANCE Isabel Luna Cayco and Dee's Magcayao-Ho

TEAM Maxed guru Chito Kjarelle and Ricky Yebela

SHARE Ban Al Jouh Resort & Spa GM Desmond Hatton and architect Arnold Mandoza

TOM Epperson and Maxed Shangri-La executive chef Christopher Bautista

Having a ripping time in the dark

WHAT'S YOUR GENERATION called? There are so many to remember—Baby Boomers, Rock N' Rollers, the Me Generation, Gen X. My own gen goes back to the disco '80s, when the hottest gadget around one's waist was an Easycall pager.

The vintage performers and show bands of each generation, such as the Carpenters of my parents' times, have been making their way to my country lately. In fact, I was ecstatic when the icons of disco, the Village People and Sister Sledge, performed at "Bench Fever, the Underwear and Denim Show."

Bench mogul and ever-so-humble Ben Chan producers hit much-vaunted biennial extravaganza patrolling his fashionary endeavors and new version wearing Bench. This year's theme was the groovy '70s, replete with roller derby dancers, mirrored disco balls, a go-go cages and even a DJ booth.

With the pulsating theme, the electrifying spectacle had the jam-packed Araneta Coliseum rooting and swooning from the opening number to closing. Imarey Ayala ripped off their Bench jeans. Allbright Law, the actor's jaws dropped at the sight of models dropping their clothes.

The gigantic, boom-box set, with its multi-colored ramp designed by talented showbusiness kahn, was filled with love-chested music and family-clad female celebrities models in Bench underwear stylized by several of the brightest designers and even Ben-zine designers such as all-around creative Carlos Lopez and versatile fashionista Gagner Tina Rap. Playboy-prepertained chests were partially covered with scraps by sweater Regie Casaul and satin tops by Nicholas-themed designer Patrice Ramos-Diaz.

Awesome director Bobbit Carmona chose the groovier years of the disco era, keeping the energy high throughout the show.

Musicians, harmonizers, and bands as lessons such as Rudy Mac Quirino, Reymon Herrera and my "cousin," Francine Prieto, got the loudest applause, while for the men the roars went to "Pinoy Big Brother" stars Enrique Macado and Sam Milby, who had the crowd all the way in the bleachers screaming. Based on the roars, just as heard some hilarious screechiness in the Ice Rink, Admin-by-land Bimbot Gumapac and totally buff Yayoyin Rubio Rubiad theatrena, who walked alongside his twin brother, Raymond.

The denim portion, nicely designed by event guru de Jerry Sumatra, ended with the original Bench codewear, Richard Gomez, who has now been with Bench for 18 years. Richard wore an American indian-themed creation and was accompanied by his pretty wife, Lucy Torres.

As Ben Chan, the ultimate retail giant, walked down the ramp at the finale, fireworks exploded behind him. A standing ovation brought to a close a fantastic show.

Then the after-show began with Sister Sledge singing, "We are family" and other classic standards. The Village People, clearly not as healthy but still in full costume, followed and the dancing didn't stop until they performed the gay anthem, "YMCA."

All three songs brought back fond memories of a happy past. I wonder what my daughter Annika will remember as her growing up songs.

Tessa! Prieto-Valdes

The Bench show featured sexy Francine Prieto, my 'cousin,' as well as Sister Sledge and Village People singing the anthems of my generation

Down memory lane at Shang

I was reminiscing all the way to Makati Shangri-La Hotel after my husband Dennis and I checked in to celebrate his 45th birthday weekend. While having a nightcap at Circles Event Bar, I was half-expecting to see the hotel's much-loved GM, Antieth Smith, walk in until I remembered that he had recently been appointed as GM of Shangri-Kuala Lumpur.

In fact, the Shang held a sendoff party the week before, both to congratulate Antieth on his new posting and to welcome new GM Philippe Castelli, a charming Swiss who will surely delight the hotel's many Shang guests. At the cocktail, Antieth was quick to reminisce—Glad I went straight to the new GM's room before greeting him. It's not every picture of friendship that allows us to joke around like that. We do miss you, Antieth!

The Shang cocktail was a foodie heaven. While indulging in the sweet highlights of the dessert station, I spotted heiress Cathy Gil Thomson-Cuyugan who invited us to relax here in Shangri-La's Health Retreat & Spa in Mactan, Cebu—no, as I am geographically impaired, I can't tell Muscat from Moscow but the "spa" in the name is a definite come on!

Roche's cosmeceuticals bash

It seems like I was at the Shang all week, as I had also attended the Head Ballroom launch of Rocheta, a men's cosmeceuticals range. Introduced by Roche Philippines. Since it is a disease occurring mostly among women after menopause, during which time the bones become very porous, brittle and slow in healing, the Roche people imagined Antonio as the women's campaign for bone health.

Together with the medicine's launch, Roche also introduced former Miss Universe Gloria Diaz as its Rocheta Gig as to www.bonebrea.com.ph/spokesperson. Beauty cannot just be skin deep! Diaz's beauty regimen must start with the bones. Gloria personifies this deep beauty as she walked on stage accompanied by super models once queens of the '90s, who all still look so stunning even if they have retired from the catwalk.

It really is quite amazing to learn what medical breakthroughs there have been. I joked with Roche marketing director Joey Sy that since Roche produced this wonder drug for healthier bones, they should also produce bone-lengthening medicine. How else I will take for sure!

E-mail the author at sugarcoat@inquirer.com.ph

BONAVITA mod reps posing with BenDiva spokesperson Gloria Diaz and Bea Princess.

BENCH Fever finale number on disco stage

EXPLOSIVE Bench genius Ben Chan

THE VILLAGE People in full costume

HOST Eric Manzano with stunning models Apples Abrera-Sudbrook, Pusty Bedia, Ivee Gonzales-Agana, Marina Benipayo and Supee Cin-Su

JUST Shop-to-ma jovial Epperson and gorgeous Amorito de Rosal

SHANGRI-LA chair Edward Kuok and Ruso Philippine Properties country head Boris Ellis

SHANG Palace staff with head waiter Arnold surprise Oberto Valdes.

BENCH Fever people Jackie Aquino, Rhoni Sala, Raja Laurel, Ben Chan and Patrice Ramos-Diaz

CEBU vacation-ers Butch Carungay, Garrison Bowsee and Amparito Uludior

NEW Makati Shang GM Philippe Castelli, Tom Zito and outgoing GM Jarlath Lynch

DELICIOUS food at longtou japanese Restaurant at Shang Makati

Widows can become whole again

FOR THE BOOK "WIDOW, INSURRECTA," Ria Dolan'Tino Flores, PhD, interviewed 200 widows. All reached the conclusion that, after a while, they could be whole again.

Flores, who was widowed in 1987 after 18 years of marriage to doctor Rodolfo Flores, gathered the materials as part of a doctoral dissertation on grief, coping mechanisms and saving attachments of widows.

Published by Flor Lit (which means "to flower for light") and printed by Makina Publishing House, the book includes stories on Imelda Cumilla, former Indian prime minister, and Gelicia Bitz, former Israeli prime minister. Most featured are well-known widows in Manila.

How Flores was able to produce the book could be due to divine guidance she got on a visit to her sister Flores' farm in Antipolo.

She was looking for a church to attend Mass and someone brought her to a chapel inside a restaurant. She found out that blind people lived there.

The community is a project of the Ephpheta Foundation, founded by Fr. Jose Weinmiller, S.J., the foundation helps the blind.

Dear and there, Flores decided that if she ever wrote a book, proceeds would go to the upkeep of the chapel. Another beneficiary would be a project of Mega. Mati Garcia.

The book was launched in September at the Makati Sports Club with former First Lady Imelda Marcos as guest of honor.

In her foreword, Dr. Nita Palma Bonoan says: "After her loss, a widow looks at an abyss, at what seemingly is an unbridgeable chasm. But, gradually through her own effort, plus the support of her siblings, family and friends, the chasm gradually becomes narrower and she becomes whole again as to the case of the author, Dr. Pat Flores."

Edited by Pedro Rodin Bayhon, the book is available at the Don Bosco religious store in Makati. Call 893 05 09.

Dr. Flores, "Tita Pudoy" to everyone, holds seminars and workshops for widows and single parents. Please call 8.9 8621 or text 0916 4500 199.

Chapel blessing

Pastor Sra. Helena Benitez celebrated her 92nd birthday by having the blessing of the Chapel of the Holy Family inside the Mira Nila compound where she and her family grew up.

She had always wanted a chapel built. The dream came true when her sons, Rosary Benitez, an architect, designed and built the chapel in 100 days. The third generation Kanot family did the stained glass version of the Holy Family behind the altar.

Bishop Rolando Tria Tirona celebrated Mass after the blessing, together with Fr. Paul Marquez, Fr. Jun Flores, Fr. Alex Ramos, Fr. Edwin Gariza and Fr. Bobot Arana.

"Tita Helen," as she is fondly called, says: "I cherished all my former model and ideal of family solidarity, love and caring than the Holy Family".

Her mother, Francisca Tiaoa Benitez, who founded Philippine Women's University 87 years ago, put family and home values in the university's educational mission.

Dream honeymoon package

THE NEW HYATT HOTEL AND Casino Manila's Ballroom is now open for special events and celebrations, particularly weddings.

The hotel is offering an exclusive Dream Honeymoon Package to the first 20 couples who will book until August their weddings in the Ballroom.

Call Hyatt Hotel and Casino Manila local 7524.

"Ms Gay Manila Pandayan Champion" in Malabon City Former child actress Star Villareal, featured again, wore a gown by John Hapanmanos. She was escorted by Dan Marlon Vasquez, Marian Tobias, Mrs. World runner-up Precious Reyna Depamorte, who is Jenica Martinez creation. The event was organized by the Malabon Designers Association.

PURELY PERSONAL

Josephine Barcenas

Model employee

What I go to the Indiana Post Office in Ifugao Hidalgo Lim Street in Malate. I always go to the window of Cecilia R. Fuentejos, a graduate of Aklan College. She taught for 13 years then moved to Manila. She has been with the Philippine postal system for 22 years.

I am always impressed by the efficient way Tita Cilla sells stamps, and always with a smile. She is always properly dressed and carefully made up. Being a simple government employee doesn't stop her from looking good and being efficient.

Back in RP

At least 400 Fil-Americans are meeting the Philippines until July 22. Nora Cunico-Bendijo, representing tourism operations officer for Team Northwest America, said ambassadors and tourism attachés were leading the Philippine tour aimed to source Arbolspot abroad that the country was a safe and attractive global destination.

A household of Tondoan Secretary Ave Umali, the four covers Manila, Cebu, Bohol, Boracay, Davao, Palawan, Zamboanga, Tagaytay de Oro, Camiguin, Leong, Tigao, Baguio and Laguna. Churches are included in the tour to extend the viewers of their religious and cultural heritage. For details, call Joan Encinas at 525-1297 or 525-4685.

Lady of Joy

The Marian title "Our Lady of Joy" was revealed in English July in 1988 by the Blessed Virgin Mary to "Ka Freddy" in Barangay Gulod, Sta. Cruz, Laguna.

It is November that year, the apocalyptic image of Our Lady of Joy or the Brown Mother was enthroned in her shrine at the Lanes in Sta. Jesusa) in Dasmari Garcia) amid a storm. The chapel became flooded as Laguna Lake overflowed.

The Our Lady of Joy feast is July 16, same as Our Lady of Mt. Carmel's.

In action

After 15 years building the National Shrine of the Divine Mercy in Santa Sta. Rosa, Marilao, Bulacan, Fr. Vic Boblez undertakes a 40-foot kind of mission—Divine Mercy in action. Fr. Vic takes care the Bethlehem Home of Brind Orphanage in Bulihan, Bulacan, home to 96 orphans and street children from babies to 12-year-olds.

Besides feeding the children, the orphanage also sends them to school.

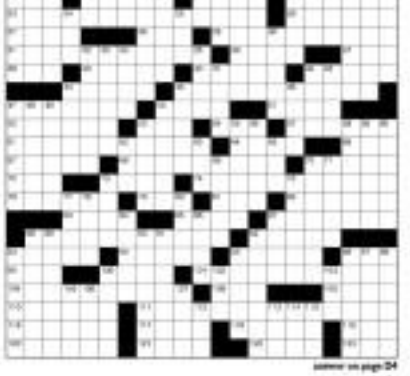
Bringing with him the same faith and hard work that built the Divine Mercy Shrine, Fr. Vic is ready with the help of Fr. Benny Concepcion, to raise funds for the orphanage. Those who want to help can call Fr. Vic at (044) 7604977 or e-mail ingadmercy@touchdown@yahoo.com.ph.

Those who want sheltering for abused children can visit Ephesus House at 8917 8170919.

Sales of Flores' book will go to the Ephata chapel

SUNDAY CROSSWORD

PREMIER CROSSWORD/ By Frank A. Longo SOMETHING EXTRA



answer on page D4

TV's popular "Smallville" lust to Erica Durance who plays Lois Lane, has joined New Line Cinema's "The Butterfly Effect 2," the long awaited sequel to the 1004 No. 1 US box-office hit that grossed more than $US80M worldwide and made Ashton Kutcher a bankable star.

Since Durance has picked up a popular icon as Lois Lane on TV's "Smallville", it's been TV all the way for her, making appearances on "Andromeda", "Stargate SG-1", and finally "Smallville", which has seen her the most delicious time to the spotlight.

After making her debut as Lois in season 4 and 5 of the show about young Clark Kent and his path to becoming the World's Greatest Hero, Durance's charm has paved her way to be added to the cast as a regular. And, she's loving it. "It's nice to know that the fans thought I was the smallest Lois Lane," she recently told FHM, who voted her as one of the world's sexiest women.

With her career poised to take off and her first significant starring role in a movie, Erica Durance seems to be poised for a move in the Hollywood scene. Though the positives of Lois Lane in the new Superman Returns movie was filled by Kate Bosworth, many "Smallville" fans wished that the film just naturally progressed out of the series with Erica playing the role of Lois Lane. →

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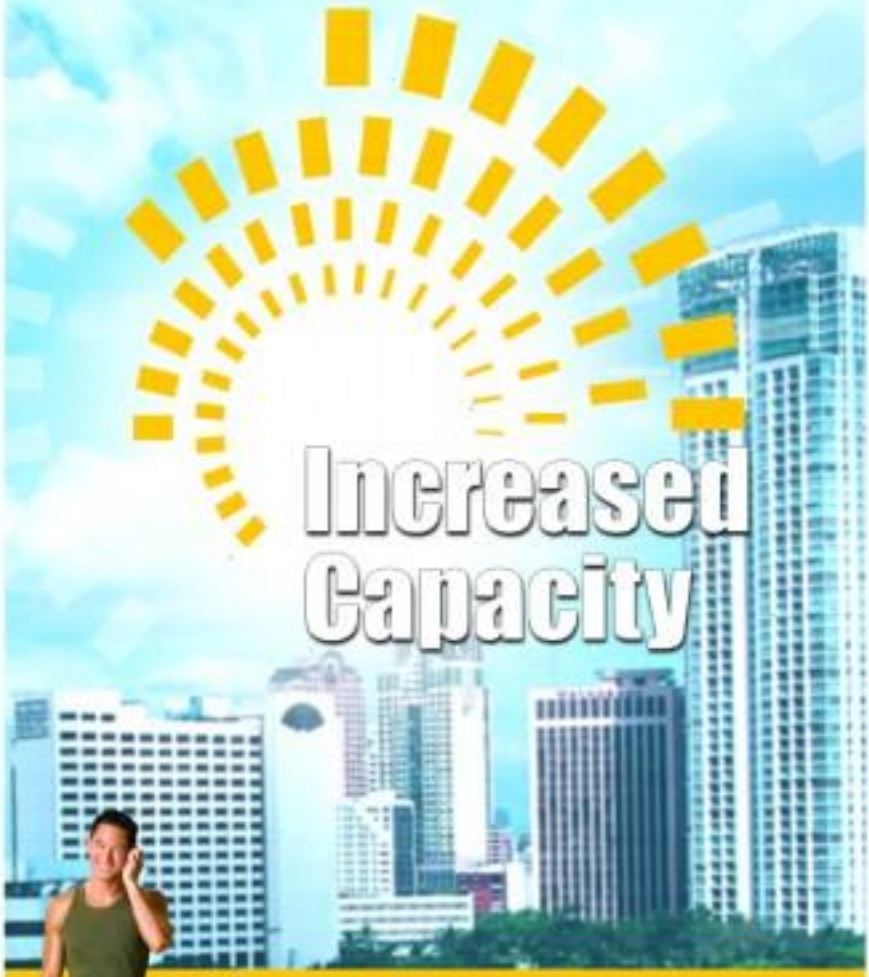

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